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Friday April 26 1996

Alaska D 8.50	Germany F 2.00	Denmark D 1.00
Andorra L 2.20	France F 1.00	Finland F 1.00
Australia A 8.50	Germany F 2.00	France F 1.00
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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,537

Arts, music, books **How the SAS blew its cover** Everything But The Girl, take two

*new* **WITNESSES** **Out of the bedsit, into the jungle**

Music, page 6

## Family ends private murder prosecution as judge rules out vital evidence



Stephen Lawrence's father, Neville, left, and aunt Cheryl Stoley, centre, being comforted by family friend Ros Howells yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN SMITH

## Anger after race case collapse

**Campaigners vow to fight on after three men cleared**

Week Chaudhary



**C**AMPAIGNERS and lawyers representing the family of murdered black teenager Stephen Lawrence vowed to continue with inquiries into his death after the case against three men accused of his killing collapsed at the Old Bailey yesterday.

There were emotional scenes at the court following the family's decision to drop their private prosecution of the men after Mr Justice Curtis ruled on Wednesday that vital eyewitness evidence was inadmissible.

Michael Mansfield QC, prosecuting, told the court that without the evidence there was "no reliable basis" for any jury to convict the men.

**Gary Dobson: a knife was found at girlfriend's home**

Shortly afterwards, Mr Justice Curtis instructed the jury foreman to formally acquit Neil Acourt, aged 20, Luke Knight, aged 18, and Gary Dobson, aged 20. They had denied that they, with others, murdered Mr Lawrence, who was stabbed to death at a bus stop in Editham, south-east London, in April 1993.

The court had been told

**Neil Acourt: shown to be an extreme racist in video film**

that Mr Lawrence, aged 18, was murdered by a mob of up to six white youths solely because he was black.

Imran Khan, the Lawrence family's solicitor, said after the acquittals: "Because not guilty verdicts were entered, we can not proceed against [the three men] ever again."

"The police have stated the inquiry continues, and if any

**Luke Knight: also caught on secret police camera**

further evidence comes to light, we will follow that up. The likelihood is we would proceed with another private prosecution against anybody else who it was suggested was responsible for the murder."

The family were saved from financial ruin after the judge ruled that prosecution costs, thought to be around £100,000, should be met from central

funds. Mr Lawrence's parents, Neville and Doreen, had raised around £70,000 through donations to bring the private murder prosecution, the fourth in 130 years after the Crown Prosecution Service dropped proceedings against two white men in July 1993, saying there was insufficient evidence to secure a conviction.

Neville Lawrence said yesterday: "I believe in fairness. I don't think what happened today is fair at all." His wife was too distressed to attend court.

Mr Khan said the family were "extremely disappointed" that the judge had ruled out vital evidence from a witness who claimed to have seen the defendants take part in Mr Lawrence's murder. "We would have hoped the identification evidence could be put before the jury—something that happens in almost every other case. It is rare for a judge to make the decision but he did."

Defence and prosecution counsel had spent almost seven days locked in legal arguments.

## £5bn VAT blow for ministers

Roger Cowe and Larry Elliott

**T**HE Government was thrown into fresh chaos last night after its hopes of a vote-winning Budget were threatened by a Court of Appeal ruling that could cost the Treasury up to £5 billion in back tax.

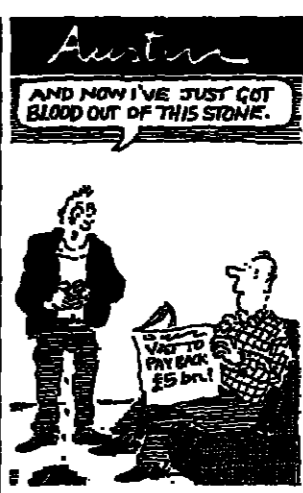
The judgment also added to the future over the impact of European law, further angering Eurosceptic MPs.

In the wake of this week's climbdown over beef and the rebellion on the divorce bill, the new blow to the Government added to backbench gloom about the Conservative party's chances of clawing back Labour's huge lead in the opinion polls.

The Treasury said it would appeal to the House of Lords against yesterday's ruling by two senior judges that a Customs provision which has been in force since VAT was introduced in 1973 is wrong in its treatment of interest-free deals. As a result shops which have had to pay excess VAT for 23 years can now apply for repayments.

Customs and Excise officials were working through the night to analyse the full cost to the public purse of the judgment. A spokeswoman said it was impossible to estimate the amount the Government might have to pay back, but counsel for Customs admitted during the appeal hearing the sum would run to billions of pounds.

Hugh Malmprice, the solicitor who acted for the victori-



ous retailer, Kingsway Furniture Group, said his client was due £10 million including interest. "Just think of all the interest-free credit over the years. Including interest going back all that time it must be £5 billion."

In the past five years alone shops have provided free credit worth more than £3 billion on furniture, electrical goods and similar products, according to the Retail Consortium, which said that one in six credit deals had charged no interest. Similar deals on car purchases could easily double that sum.

The case, decided on European law, infuriated Conservative Eurosceptics, who said it could cost the Government the election.

Peter Jenkins, a VAT specialist with accountants Ernst & Young, said: "My understanding is that the case was decided on a European directive. That makes it very

difficult for Customs & Excise to appeal. It looks as if they have lost fair and square."

David Heathcoat-Amory, the Paymaster General, said last night the £5 billion figure was "wildly exaggerated and has no basis in any calculation by Customs or Treasury".

Bill Cash, a leading Conservative backbench Eurosceptic, said: "If it does mean a multi-billion pound payback, the impact on our Budget combined with the potentially devastating blow if the European Union wins a massive slaughter policy would be a substantial setback to our chances of winning the election with tax cuts." He added: "We need a complete evaluation of the impact of European policies on British sovereignty, government and commerce."

Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, said: "This is another example of Government incompetence."

Last night, the Treasury said it could not give a figure for the potential cost to the Government's finances, which have already been hit by the slowdown in the economy. In the financial year that ended in March, the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement was £23 billion, almost 50 per cent higher than originally estimated, reducing chances of a huge tax giveaway in the Budget.

Yesterday's decision, the latest and biggest in a series of reverses for Customs, could be followed by even more serious rulings. One pending case concerning VAT on company cars could cost the Government between £15 billion and £25 billion.

## Magistrate's rough justice laid before the Queen

Owen Bowcott

**N**OSTALGIA will get us all in the end. The Queen, who enjoyed attending juvenile courts as a youngster, had her wish to return to the public benches granted yesterday when Maidenhead magistrates staged a private session of judicial theatre.

Whether by custom or constitutional imperative, the monarch does not attend hearings where justice is being done in her name, and Her Majesty was apparently itching to get a good view of the action. No chance.

The compromise arranged by Rosemary Thomson, chairwoman of the Council of Magistrates Association, was to book a day at Maidenhead court with a full training session.

The pretend trials included a drink-driving case, death by dangerous driving and wife-battering. Lawyers, policemen and relatives of court clerks played the roles.

One hearing re-enacted a real case in which a youth had stolen a royal coat of arms. Her Majesty, reportedly, was amazed.

## Prague Writers' Festival 1996

This year the Prague Writers' Festival, directed by Michael March, will once again showcase a selection of fine authors from around the world. Meet them at the Viola Theatre, Národní 7, (nearest metro Národní) from May 9-11. For more details call: 44 171 7134133

## MPs threaten to mangle divorce bill

**P**ATRICK WINTOUR, Chief Political Correspondent

**A**REKING Conservative leadership was yesterday under pressure from senior backbenchers to scrap the divorce bill, after Wednesday night's Commons defeat inflicted with the help of four Cabinet ministers.

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay, ruled out shelving the bill, despite backbench calls, led by John Patten, to recognise belatedly that the bill remained anti-family and massively unpopular with the party.

An unholy alliance of Labour and Conservative

rightwingers, led by Edward Leigh, are set to mangle the bill still further in committee. Labour warned that unless the Government agrees to inject a new emphasis on marriage reconciliation and the needs of children, it may vote against the bill's third reading in June. It is impossible to predict how many Tories would be reckless enough to vote against the entire bill at that third reading.

In the Commons, John Major accused the Labour leader, Tony Blair, of being willing to shelve his Christian conscience for party political advantage. He said Mr Blair was being deliberately misleading to interpret

Wednesday night's free vote as a humiliation for his government. The 200-196 vote extended from one year to 18 months the minimum period before divorce is granted.

Mr Major said his entire party, including ministers, had been given a genuinely free vote, claiming Mr Blair and his henchmen did not understand the parliamentary concept of a free vote.

The Liberal Democrats, and in private some Labour MPs, joined in the criticism of Mr Blair's tactics over an essentially liberal piece of social legislation. There was also some signs last night that Mr Blair's behaviour had served to reduce Tory backbench de-

termination to mount further rebellions.

In the Commons Mr Blair, intent on fostering the impression of a government in advanced stages of disintegration, told Mr Major the bill had been about the Government's entire ethos, asserting the vote showed "the humiliating state to which your authority has been reduced".

But Mr Major pointed out that at the time of the Queen's Speech last November, he had promised to give a free vote on the two key personal conscience issues in the bill, that of removing the concept of fault from divorce and the length of cooling off periods before couples could divorce.

"I gave my word and have kept it," Mr Major snapped.

He then played on Mr Blair's Christianity for the first time. "The next time you talk to us about your conscience, and matters relating to church and conscience, perhaps you will indicate that it doesn't apply when you see political advantage."

Labour sources, however, insisted Wednesday's vote was a legitimate target since the Cabinet had initially only granted the free vote on the two central planks of the bill because of the deep Tory divisions over family policy.

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Sketch

Divided by a common language



Simon Hoggart

It's curious that as the politics of the main parties move closer — with the two sides becoming indistinguishable, like the pigs and the men at the end of Animal Farm — debate in the Commons is increasingly riotous.

Take home affairs. Jack Straw hasn't yet called for capital punishment in schools, but he might any day, and Michael Howard will cap it with the return of the thumbscrew. He will need to, since each party is terrified of being thought soft on crime.

The words they dread hearing are the Home Secretary declaring on TV: "It was the Libber Party which voted against public disarming for little bugs 'em kinnot trust Libber on krimmi!"

Because the parties are really so close, they have to pretend that there is a bottomless policy chasm between them. For instance, yesterday Tony Banks (Lab, Newham NW) complained that Britain now had more video cameras spying on its citizens than any other country, including the old Eastern Europe. This was a condemnation of 17 years of Tory rule, etc etc.

Mr Howard plunged into an effluvia of outrage. "Three spiks the true voice of the Libber Party!" he yelled. "Antediluvian views while Kinnasivattives trying to reduce krimmi... you kinnot trust Libber on krimmi!"

David Evans (C, Welwyn) is the boor who, misguidedly, thinks of himself as a much-loved national figure, the embodiment of the common man. He is really the embodiment of a peevish pig. He demanded identity cards to stop illegal immigrants from drawing benefit.

"But if tha' lo' opposi'e..." (Mr Evans doesn't just have glottal stops, he has glottal seizures)... ever get ter pahr, inflation will be 26 poin' nine

First night

Fascism echoes patrician culture

Michael Billington

The Designated Mourner

WALLACE SHAWN'S new play, The Designated Mourner, is a minimalist work not unlike My Dinner with Andre; no action, no instant narrative.

We are greeted at the Cottage, in David Hare's production, by a long trestle table laden with books. Behind the table sit three characters who address us and occasionally each other. Jack is a college graduate who has always feigned an interest in Rembrandt and poetry but who is plagued by his own insecure sense of identity.

Alongside him sit his wife, Judy, and his famous father-in-law, Howard, who have always moved effortlessly through the rarefied world of literature, the arts and the finer products of Western civilisation.

again and tax will soon be niney-eight per cent, and we'll head ID's not jus' ter show who's got the right ter be ere, but ter show the guards to get art of ere! A few Tories cheered wanly. Mr Evans's rant is a wisting asset.

Austin Mitchell (Lab, Grimsby) said that robbery had increased 484 per cent since the Conservatives came to office. David Maclean, a Home Office minister, blamed Tony Blair. (Mr Blair once drew a distinction between poverty-stricken mothers shoplifting for food, and organised gangs. This was not thought tough on krimmi.)

It was too much for Mr Banks. "They're all barking mad!" he shouted, and "Bang him!" (Mr Banks is tough on Conservatism, tough on the causes of Conservatism.)

By now half the House seemed to be shouting demeritally at the other half. But there was something missing. We had not heard from Ann Widdecombe, the Home Office minister popularly known as Doris Karloff, or Bella Lugosi, or Glad the Impaler. She spoke on prisons, after Liz Lynne (Lib Dem, Rochdale) had asked why denizens of a local Group 4-run prison kept climbing over the wall into her constituency.

"She is insulting the prison staff!" she yelled. "It is time she looked at their achievements!" After all, in a near-empty prison, there are few left to applaud them.

Mr Howard wrapped up with his tough new sentencing policy, which he contrasted with Tony Blair. "The Lidder of the Opposition has been going up and down the kinty making speeches which excuse shoplifting. He will go down in hist'ry as the Piffler's Friend!"

One wonders how hist'ry will describe it: "Mr Tony Blair (1983) was usually known as 'The Piffler's Friend'. The violent crime wave which engulfed Britain in the 1990s was blamed on his view that there were worse crimes than nicking a few Rolos for your kid..."

"Striking 'em all up," said Mr Banks, of nobody specific. Later Douglas Hogg made a remarkably calm and placid statement. The theory here is that they've been mixing Prozac into the mashed sheep brains in his feed.

In fact, envisions an apocalyptic world which has seen what Jack calls "the disembowelling of the over-bowelled". What is remarkable about Shawn's play — or, as of the British government — who intercut monologues — is its evenness of tone and sense of historical determinism.

Shawn recognises the value of high culture yet condemns those who hug it to themselves as if it were their own. He also understands the deprivation of those who are locked out of the secret garden, yet bewails the descent into barbarism of a society where "everyone on earth who could read John Donne was dead".

Shawn denies us many of the conventional satisfactions of drama but what he has to say is crucial: that we live in a world that preserves high culture for the few, that is leading to a dumbing-down of the mind and coarsening of the spirit and that is poised on the brink of a return to the dark ages. His prime target is clearly America with its creative of protected oases of culture in a desert of rank commercialism. But almost everything he says is relevant to modern Britain.

It is a demanding play but attention is held by the fine acting of Mike Nichols as Jack, breaking down into tear-soaked regret for what is lost; by Miranda Richardson as his wife cocooned in her own world of finer feelings; and by David de Keyser as the father-in-law who represents the insulated smugness of the poetic sensibility. Shawn has written an unerring tract for our times that equates spiritual and political fascism.

This review appeared in later editions yesterday.

Road tax scams peak

David Henche Westminster Correspondent

CUTS in staff cuts at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in Swansea are making it easier for car owners to evade the £140-a-year road tax, MPs have been told by the Department of Transport.

Non-payment has reached a record £163 million a year and the agency is failing to meet

More attacks expected before Ulster elections □ Second failure for 'impaired' mainland operation

Bridge bomb IRA's biggest

Duncan Campbell, Richard Norton-Taylor and David Starrock in Dublin

THE IRA stepped up its bombing campaign in England with a device containing the most powerful explosives ever used in a mainland bomb. Security sources said last night that other bombs aimed at transport infrastructure could be expected before the elections in Northern Ireland next month.

The bomb placed under Hammersmith Bridge in west London on Wednesday night would have caused massive damage and disruption but failed to detonate properly. No one was injured in the explosion.

The quantity of explosives indicates that the IRA is still seeking a "spectacular" before the elections in Northern Ireland on May 30. Previously it had appeared that it merely wanted to cause minor disruption to show that it was active, without derailing the peace process.

The device planted under the south side of the bridge contained 30lb of high explosive, understood to be Semtex, which was to have been detonated by two blasts. A spokesman for Scotland Yard said it highlighted the need for the public to remain vigilant.

"These devices would have caused a very large explosion and there's no doubt that they were made to kill, cause injury and major structural damage to Hammersmith Bridge as well as enormous disruption to London and its community."

The explosions followed two coded telephone warnings, the first at 10.22pm. The area was cordoned off and there were two small explosions at 10.50pm. The device was hidden in two containers the size of a briefcase. The detonators did not ignite the explosives. This is the second time a large IRA

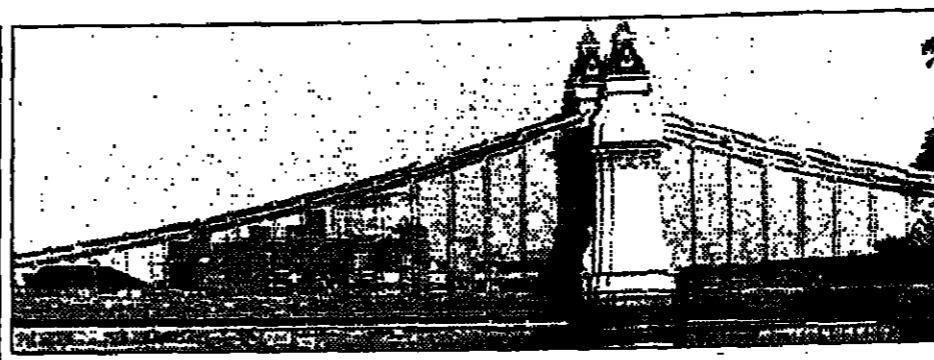
bomb has malfunctioned, the first being when IRA man Ed O'Brien was blown up on the 171 bus at the Aldwych on February 15.

The double failure is taken to indicate that the IRA's bomb-making operation on the mainland is impaired. There is no evidence, as has been suggested in the past, that the operation was deliberately sabotaged.

The bomb was placed on the anniversary of the Easter Rising in Dublin on April 24 1916. Security sources said yesterday they expected further attacks on a variety of targets to apply pressure on the Government. They speculated that the Aldwych incident, and the discovery of detonators and bomb-making equipment at O'Brien's flat, may have forced the IRA to use less experienced activists.

In Dublin, all parties condemned the bomb as unhelpful to the peace process. David Adams, of the Ulster Democratic Party, the loyalist group which has strong links with the paramilitary Ulster Defence Association, did not, however, believe that it would jeopardise the loyalist ceasefire.

The IRA is believed to hold about two tonnes of Semtex. Given that the average IRA bomb requires only a few pounds to prime the much larger quantities of homemade explosives, the IRA may be demonstrating it has the resources for a long campaign if necessary.



Hammersmith Bridge, west London, where 30lb of Semtex failed to explode

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US plans rapid exit from Bosnia

John Palmer in Brussels David Fairhall, and Martin Walker in Washington

THE first outlines of a United States exit-plan for its forces in Bosnia are emerging, with a European-led operation remaining in the former Yugoslav republic but US backup ready to come to the rescue if necessary.

Under a proposal now being circulated, US rapid reaction forces would be based in Hungary, and US air power would be available to any Nato forces staying in Bosnia after the alliance's peace-implementation mandate runs out at the end of this year.

Although the Nato allies remain publicly committed to an "in together, stay together, out together" formula, with the pull-out set for December, no one believes the process of political and economic reconstruction can be completed by then.

But any follow-on operation must reconcile the contradictory demands of the US Congress, which wants its boys home on time, and of the Europeans, notably the British government, who insist that US ground forces must continue to be involved.

The Hungarian option — whereby US forces which arrived from bases in Germany withdraw, but only just across the border from northern Bosnia — is being explored in Brussels as a possible way out of the bind.

"There is a growing consensus that the international community cannot simply pack up its bags and quit Bosnia at the end of the year," said a Nato diplomat attending



US soldiers patrol Caparde, near Tuzla, stopping Bosnian Muslims from entering a Serb-held area to visit their former homes PHOTOGRAPH: VADM GHIRDA

this week's meetings of the military committee. "There will be an ongoing need for peacekeeping troops for some further time."

In Whitehall yesterday, officials were not prepared to discuss the Hungarian plan, except to dismiss it as "speculation". Ministers remain publicly committed to withdrawing the present Nato forces by December 30, the deadline set by last year's Dayton peace agreement.

But the Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, has privately indicated that British troops would not remain unless US ground forces were also involved. The 19,000 US troops are expected to be home within a month of the December 20 deadline.

Yet British military sources also acknowledge that the large US division based in Tuzla, northern Bosnia, has not been as active as expected, given its central political importance.

Constrained by instructions from Washington to avoid expanding their mission beyond the mandate specified by the Dayton accord or taking casualties — particularly in an election year — US troops rarely move around in groups of less than four vehicles, for fear of being ambushed or taken hostage.

"Saying that the country ought to be politically unified before Nato pulls out is too hard a test," William Perry, the US defence secretary, told the New York Times.

ment at that point for keeping Nato in longer? I can only think of one, and that is to prevent a war from starting up again — not to reunify the country," he said.

"What kind of a force deployment do we need to provide an adequate deterrence for that not happening? Is air power alone sufficient? If ground forces have to supplement, do they have to be located in Bosnia or just a ready reserve force on standby?"

Three cleared as murder case collapses

continued from page 1

guments over the admissibility of the evidence of Dwayne Brooks, aged 21, who was with Mr Lawrence on the night of the murder.

He had nicked out Neil Acourt and Luke Knight in identity parades, but told police immediately after the murder that he could only describe the man who had stabbed Mr Lawrence.

The judge also heard that Mr Brooks allegedly told Detective Sergeant Christopher Crowley that he could only remember the men's physical descriptions and hair but had not seen their faces.

Mr Justice Curtis ruled that Mr Brooks's identification was not based on true recognition, was contradictory, and contaminated. He said: "Putting one injustice on top of another does not cure the first injustice. Thanks to the Lawrence family."

The collapse of the trial meant the jury did not hear evidence presented at a committal hearing last April. Video footage, shot by a secret police camera in Dobson's flat in Eitham, showed the three defendants were extreme racists accustomed to brandishing knives.

Fibres taken from Mr Lawrence's hand were also consistent with fibres taken from a jacket belonging to Dobson and a 10 inch knife, suspected of being the murder weapon, was found hidden under the bed of Dobson's girlfriend.

Knives and racism on film

Viviek Claudhery

POLICE officers installed a secret camera and microphone in a plug socket in the home of Gary Dobson, who was acquitted yesterday of the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

Two films, shot by the camera at Mr Dobson's home in Eitham, south-east London, in December 1994, showed him, his co-defendants, Neil Acourt and Luke Knight, and friends using racist language and wielding knives in an apparent practice stabbing of black people.

There is a suggestion that they knew they were being bugged but not filmed.

In one scene in the films, which were shown during a committal hearing last September, a friend of Mr Acourt is heard saying that those who murdered Lawrence must be "laughing their nuts off".

Mr Acourt replies: "They're doing that mass." adding: "I reckon every nigger should be chopped up and left with nothing but \*\*\*\*\* stumps."

Mr Acourt also adds: "Enoch Powell, mate, you are the don of dons. Get back into Parliament and show

those cock suckers what it's all about."

In other scenes, Mr Acourt and Mr Knight can be heard yelling racist abuse at black entertainers while watching the Royal Variety Performance on television and at leading black athletes while watching the Sports Personality of the Year programme.

Throughout the films, all three of those who stood trial for Lawrence's murder fire off abuse against black and Asian people. Mr Acourt describes in detail his hatred for them, saying that if he were to kill himself he would first "kill every black c---, every copper, every paki".

Throughout the racist abuse, Mr Dobson and Mr Acourt can be seen walking around the house, wielding a large kitchen knife and stabbing furniture with an overarm motion.

At other times they discuss torturing black and Asian people and setting fire to them.

Several weapons were seized from the homes of the three men, including a Gurkha knife and a gun.

The films were to have been shown to the jury at the private prosecution brought by Lawrence's parents.

Advertisement for Renault Megane. Text: "BELT UP" The new Megane is giving a talk on safety. Call 0800 701 702. It could be fundamental. THE NEW RENAULT MEGANE — IT TALKS YOUR LANGUAGE

Large advertisement on the right side of the page, partially obscured. Visible text includes "gas free", "killed", "killings", "ambous", and "Peter Mandelson".

طوكيو من الازهر



Girlfriend whose elderly parents were murdered hails 'victory for love and truth'



Harry and Megan Toose: Treated Jonathon Jones as family

Judges free man jailed over killings at farmhouse

Duncan Campbell Crime Correspondent

A MAN jailed for life for the murder of his girlfriend's parents was yesterday freed by the Court of Appeal after judges decided his conviction was unsafe.

are unsafe for reasons which we shall give on a future occasion," said Lord Justice Rose. Accordingly the convictions will be quashed and the defendant will be discharged.



Jonathon Jones hugs girlfriend Cheryl Toose after being freed by the Court of Appeal yesterday

She said last night that she had never had any doubt of Mr Jones's innocence and would never have supported him if she had believed he was in any way involved.

quity. "In these circumstances, while South Wales police will act swiftly on any new evidence which may be received in the near future, no fresh investigation into facts which have already been examined will be started."

was in Orpington, Kent, on the day of the murders. No scientific evidence linked Mr Jones to the killings. He had a good relationship with the Tooses, who treated him as part of the family, and had no significant money problems.

The case is the third involving South Wales police in which murder convictions have been quashed after high-profile campaigns and appeals.

Transport green paper backfires

Keith Harper and Rebecca Smithers

Main points

DEVASTATING official indictment of the state of Britain's roads was withheld by the Government last night as its much delayed green paper on transport received a lukewarm response from environmental groups and the Opposition.

- A new system of planning for trunk roads
Increased powers for local authorities to manage traffic demand
Tougher control of city car use
New initiatives to promote bus use
National cycling targets to promote cycling
Increased use of private finance for transport, particularly the railways

Critics wonder still after 'Alice' find

Giles Foden

THE dark rumours about him took on the currency of truth long ago: Lewis Carroll was over-entertained in young girls. Now, it seems, the author and Oxford mathematician might be on the point of rehabilitation.



The young Alice Liddell as photographed by Charles Dodgson (right), alias Lewis Carroll

son family archives in Guildford Museum Room for a forthcoming screenplay, has discovered a fragment of paper. She believes it to be a summary of the diarist's missing pages, written by Violet Dodgson, one of the nieces.

hood were pointed out by the critic William Empson as long ago as 1935, in a famous essay in his book Some Versions Of Pastoral.

Eric Griffiths, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and author of The Printed Voice Of Victorian Poetry, said yesterday: "That his writing is paedophilic in a certain sense is absolutely true. Yet surely the point is that the evidence of the books wanting to preserve the state of being both an adult and a child is stronger than any fragmentary biographical data could be."

As Peter Mandelson has already made plain, New Labour ain't about anything if it ain't about lowering taxes for the better off, and it's high time Clare — lovely, headstrong Clare — began to realise this. Bel Littlejohn

Dixons UNBEATABLE DEALS ON LATEST GAMES. TOY STORY FOR SEGA MEGADRIVE £32.99. SEGA MEGADRIVE PRIMAL RAGE £19.99. SONIC & KNUCKLES £19.99. FIFA 96 £34.99. SONY PLAYSTATION ALIEN TRILOGY £44.99. THEME PARK £34.99. PGA GOLF 96 £34.99. ACTUA SOCCER £39.99. SUPER NINTENDO PRIMAL RAGE £17.99. SUPER PUNCHOUT £19.99. KILLER INSTINCT £29.99.

4 BRITAIN

# Farmers win right to fight EU

Michael White, Paul Brown and Stephen Bates

FARMERS cleared the first hurdle in their legal battle to challenge the worldwide ban on beef yesterday, as MPs were told in the Commons that a cull of 40,000 cattle most at risk of BSE would only go ahead if the European Union agreed to plans to have the embargo on beef exports lifted.

The National Farmers' Union won leave to seek a judicial review in the High Court of last month's EU decision to ban beef exports from Britain. Mr Justice Turner said the National Farmers' Union had an "arguable case" that the EU ban was illegal and ordered the case should be referred to the European Court "at the earliest expedient moment".

In the Commons, Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, admitted in reply to a question from Labour on Britain's announcement of a culling plan, that his proposals to target high risk cattle — amounting to tens of thousands rather than hundreds of thousands — would not be essential in terms of either human or animal health, given the improvements in the food chain already introduced.

He told MPs: "I have made it clear to commissioner Franz Fischler that the Government would only consider implementing such a scheme in the context of plans for the lifting of the EU ban on British beef."

The NFU's application was for a judicial review of the refusal by the Ministry of Agriculture and Customs and Excise to issue health certificates for live animals for export. Since they were carry-

ing out the instructions of the EU, it is a method of challenging the commission's power.

The European Court is the only forum that can rule on the validity of the ban, and if it found for the farmers they would be able to claim millions in compensation from the commission.

Stuart Isaacs QC, for the NFU, told the judge that the effect of the ban had been catastrophic.

In 1995 the UK had exported beef and beef products worth \$520 million worldwide. As a result of the ban that trade had ceased completely, putting at risk the livelihoods of more than 25,000 agricultural workers, 62,000 in meat processing, 7,500 in the cattle auction business and 8,500 in the haulage industry.

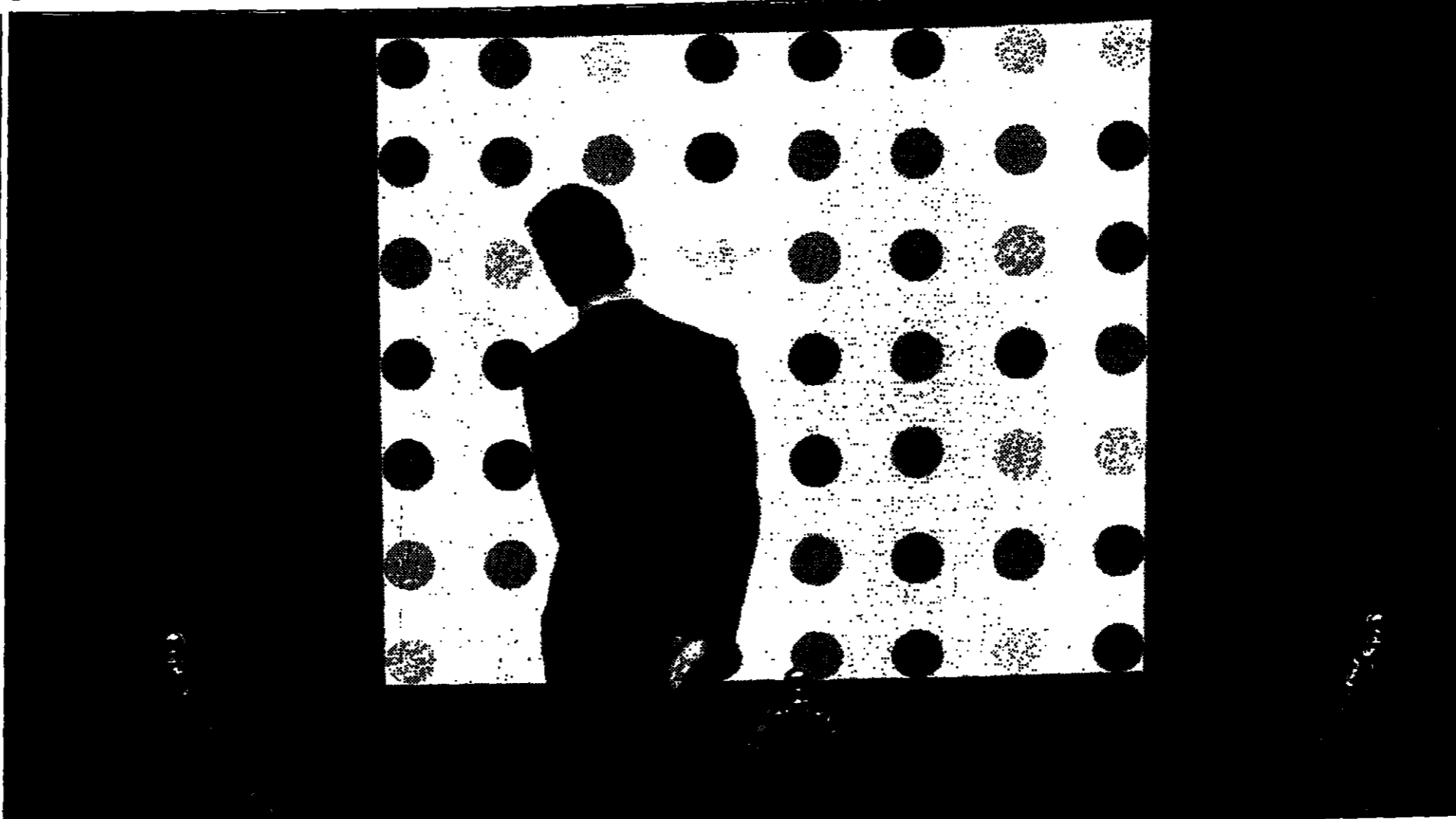
Mr Hogg is due to resume what he called "negotiating and persuading" in Luxembourg on Monday, amid frustration among MPs that valuable time has been lost.

In Brussels, doubts were growing last night about whether the slaughter of 40,000 additional cattle would be enough to satisfy EU agriculture ministers.

Diplomats from some member states expressed reservations about the extent of the cull, pointing out that they had already slaughtered more cattle from Britain themselves, most notably the Dutch who have killed 64,000 veal calves and the French who have also killed imported cattle.

A commission spokesman said of the latest British proposal: "It is a step in the right direction, but how big a step or how far it goes in the right direction have yet to be decided."

Officials said the commission would not accept pre-conditions from Britain in return for lifting the ban.



Spectator spot... Adrenochrome Semicarbazone Sulfonate by artist Damien Hirst will be his first major work to be sold at auction by Christie's, London. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

## Journalists at suspended BBC Arabic service fear for their lives as they face deportation

Kathy Evans

MORE than 30 Arab journalists who worked for the BBC Arabic television channel face deportation from Britain following the suspension of the corporation's news supply contract with the

Saudi satellite station Orbit. The service was suspended last Sunday after it broadcast an Arabic version of the Panorama programme Death of a Prince on human rights in Saudi Arabia. About 200 staff are expected to lose their jobs. The 30 journalists facing deportation were on work per-

mits tied to their jobs at the service. Two said they would be in extreme danger if they were sent home, because of some broadcasts critical of their governments and militant Islamic groups in their countries. Both have asked the BBC management to intervene with the Home Office

in their cases. One said he would be killed if forced to return to the Sudan. He said he had been in exile for 16 years after spending nearly a year in jail. "If I go back I know I will end up in one of those ghost houses and be tortured. I went to school with half the cabinet. The Is-

lamic government knows me well and my work for BBC." A former editor at the service said: "Many of us think that the corporation knew what it was doing when it broadcast the Arabic version of Panorama. They knew it would mean the end of the Orbit contract. We believe the

service was killed off in the interests of British business." BBC Worldwide said every effort would be made to find another communication channel for the Arabic service. "We recognise the BBC has obligations to its staff and we will do the right thing by them," said a spokesman.

## Tabloids fight as World Cup 'spot the ball' becomes farce

Alex Bellis

THEY thought it was all over... and it was too, for a moment.

Geoff Hurst was said to be thrilled that the ball he kicked into the net three times during England's 1966 World Cup victory had been discovered in Dusseldorf, Germany.

Total Football magazine which kicked off a campaign to find the famous orange ball was also overjoyed and said that its return to England would have a talismanic effect and improve the ailing fortunes of the national team. But before the ball had time to reach Hurst, The Sun announced yesterday that it too had discovered the ball — a hundred miles away in a cellar near Augsburg.

Then the Daily Mirror, turning the leathery piece of sporting heritage into a kind of political football, informed Hurst's agent, David Davis, last night that in fact it had found the ball and would present it to the footballer today.

Mr Davis said yesterday the whole affair had turned into a farce. "Until all the balls have been looked at properly, how can we tell?" The last claim was from a man in Hunslet, West Yorkshire, who called a radio station saying he won it in a local charity raffle.

## Cluster of CJD cases in Kent

Alan Watkins

AN APPARENT cluster of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease has come to light in Kent, it was disclosed yesterday, and government scientists are investigating three further suspected cases among women aged between 20 and 30.

It will be many months before it is established whether any of the cases involve the new strain of CJD which appears more closely related to bovine spongiform encephalopathy than to the better known sporadic form of CJD, and which convinced scientists that BSE had probably crossed into humans.

One member of the spongiform encephalopathy advisory committee (SEAC) said: "If more cases among young age groups are reported for the rest of this year, we have to face the fact that BSE somehow represents a major threat to public health."

have been reported in London and in Bridlington, North Yorkshire. Much more important is the fall in the age profile of CJD sufferers. At least one of the Kent cases is thought to involve the new CJD strain — an assessment based on the way the symptoms present themselves.

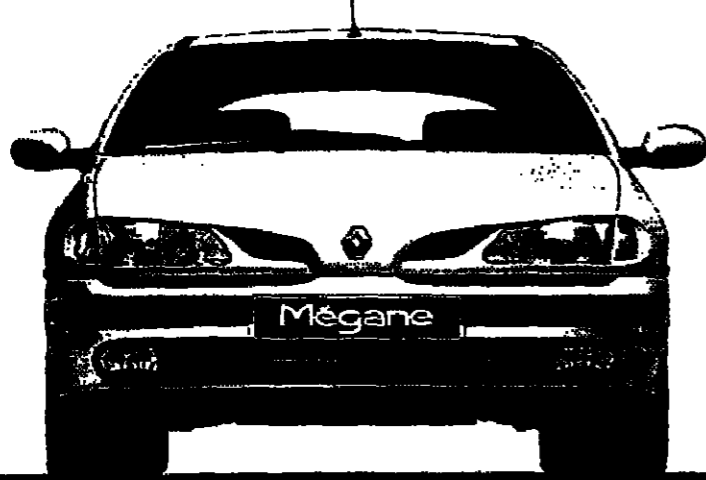
The new suspected cases disclosed by the Department of Health were reported between January 1 and April 16 and will be difficult for scientists to explain.

The following figures for cases this year were given to the Guardian: age under 20, no new cases; 20 to 30, three women and one man, thought to include one of the Ashford victims; 30 to 40, no new cases; 41 to 50, three women, one suspected of having a rare variant of CJD, Gerschler-Strauss syndrome; 51 to 60, one woman; 61 and over, three women.

French doctors are today questioning the link between BSE and CJD, writes Chris Millar. They say they have seen a case of the new form of the illness which appears to have no links with beef. The researchers point out if other cases emerge in European countries without BSE in cattle, it will mean cows are not the cause of the disease in humans.

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6 WORLD NEWS

Russia and China form united front

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

WITH champagne toasts and bear-nug bonhomie, China and Russia declared a "strategic partnership" for the next century yesterday and, in a slap at the United States, vowed to resist the imposition of a new hegemony.

'Sino-Russian friendly relations have entered a new era'

Jiang Zemin

'I can't name a single question on which we would have different opinions'

Boris Yeltsin

Nato towards Russia's border as 'impenetrable'.

Concrete issues involving money rather than rhetoric proved more difficult. Neither side would say whether agreement had been reached on a gas pipeline from Siberia to the Yellow Sea, billed as the centrepiece of a new commercial partnership.

The mood of carefully orchestrated amity contrasted sharply with the bitterness surrounding previous trips by Kremlin leaders.

"I can't name a single question on which we would have different opinions," said President Yeltsin, who is using the trip to enhance his image as an international statesman before Russia's presidential elections in June.

So effusive was he that he announced agreement on one issue on which it was clear none existed. He told a press conference that China had promised to join the international ban on nuclear tests by the end of the year. China's foreign ministry quickly disavowed, saying details had yet to be discussed.

Mr Yeltsin's politicking contributed the only public sour note so far to the visit, which continues today with a trip to Shanghai to sign a confidence-building pact with China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

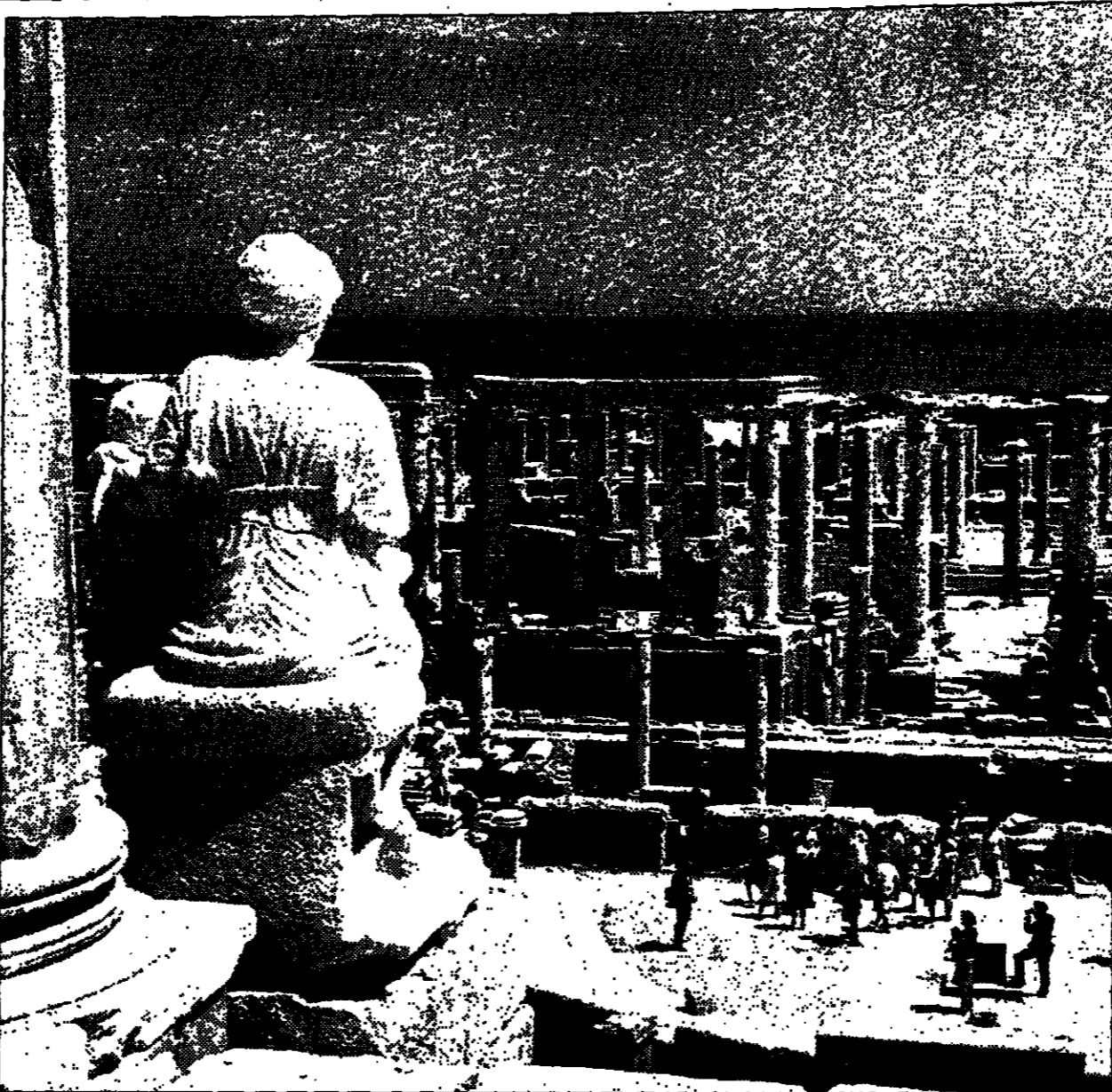
Addressing the Chinese Communist Party leadership, Mr Yeltsin warned that victory by his Communist Party rival Gennady Zyuganov in June would bring catastrophe. "If they win, civil war would start in Russia. This would be an end to reforms. This cannot be allowed."

Officials signed 13 agreements relating to the 2,700-mile border, and co-operation on space, energy and nuclear power, but few of them appear to do much more than reaffirm previous accords. Details were scarce, particularly on military matters.

Russia began talks yesterday with the Paris Club of government creditors on rescheduling \$38 billion in debt with the London Club of commercial bank creditors pushed up Russian loan prices.

Mr Yeltsin offered unequivocal support for China's right to rule Taiwan and Tibet. Mr Jiang did the same for Russia's claim to Chechnya, and described the expansion of

Leader comment, page 8



Long-standing attraction... Westerners are drawn by well-preserved Roman sites like this one at Leptis Magna.

Tourism thrives in Gadafy's desert

Westerners are discovering Libya, as Kathy Evans found recently in Tripoli

LIBYA, the land of Colonel Gadafy and considerable riches, is being discovered by British and American governments to be one of the main sponsors of international terrorism, is now playing host to thousands of well-heeled Western tourists.

"Libya's lovely," said one British tourist, who did not want to be identified. "I don't know why more people don't come here."

Getting there is an exercise in endurance. United Nations sanctions, in force since 1992 because Libya refuses to hand over two suspects wanted for the Lockerbie bombing, have cut the country off to air travellers.

Visitors now have to

make a six-hour journey by car from Djerba in neighbouring Tunisia. Alternatively, there is the 2,000-mile trek from Cairo or 12-hour boat ride from Malta.

Service also leaves a lot to be desired. Most hotels are state-owned and Libyans are unused to roles as reception clerks or waiters. Tunisians and Moroccans take many hotel jobs.

Another disadvantage is that alcohol is banned in Libya. Yet tourism has become the country's fastest growing business, providing the only source of foreign currency other than oil.

Dozens of tourism companies have sprung up to cater for the new visitors.

Libya boasts the best and most complete Roman ruins in the world at Leptis Magna, Sabratha and Shabat. In the south, there is the 4,000-year-old city of Ghadamis, which claims to be the oldest and most ecologically efficient city in the world.

But for most tourists now venturing into Libya, the spectacular desert is the greatest attraction.

"Obviously, Libya is not for lager louts or sun-sea, and sex crowd," commented Salem Magadmi, of Sahara Tours. "The desert freaks are our market, and for them we can offer the best in desert camping and the world's cleanest air and environment."

Tourists can spend a month touring desert dunes and lush oases in four-wheel drives with Tuareg bedouin guides. But it is

not cheap. Tours are £90 a day, including hotels and transport. "I've had a wonderful holiday and I felt very safe here," said Swiss school-teacher, Sylvie Ferrutjinet, aged 40, who spent a week camping in the desert.

Germans provide Libya's top tourist market, followed by the Italians, Spanish and Swiss.

"We are planning to market ourselves in London this year," said the guide from Sahara Tours. "We would like to do the same in the United States, but there are still a few problems."

The biggest of those problems is that Americans are banned by law from visiting Libya. An American discovered to be working in Libya's oil fields was recently fined \$250,000 (£165,000).

PLO vote paves way for talks on final status

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

THE Palestine Liberation Organisation's revocation of the core of its founding covenant has opened the way for crucial talks with Israel to open at the end of next week on the future of Palestine.

Negotiations on a so-called final status agreement, due to be implemented in 1998, will cover all the most contentious issues at the heart of the Middle East's most fractious dispute: refugees, Jewish settlements, final borders and the status of Jerusalem.

But, say critics of Wednesday's changes in the PLO covenant, the Palestinians will go naked into the conference chamber, having in effect given up their claim, based on their natural majority, to control the destiny of the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean.

The changes in the covenant were approved, at the insistence of President Yasser Arafat, by the PLO's "parliament" - the Palestine National Council (PNC). Mr Arafat insists that the outcome of the next negotiations will be a Palestinian sovereign state, with Jerusalem as its capital.

But he has also made it clear that the state he will accept will be a small, pale shadow of the Palestine envisaged by the PLO founding fathers.

Meeting for the first time since the 1967 Six Day War on Palestinian soil, the PNC session in Gaza City approved the changes by 50 votes to 54, with 14 abstentions.

The size of the majority astonished even Palestinian observers, who had predicted that Mr Arafat would struggle to achieve the two-thirds majority necessary for constitutional change. Voting was by

a show of hands, at Mr Arafat's insistence.

In the end, most of the PNC bowed to presidential pressure. Radical elements, including the Popular and Democratic fronts, boycotted the session. Individual dissidents, like the respected Gaza Independent, Haider Abdel-Shafi, and human rights activist Hanan Ashrawi, voted against the changes.

The outcome of the vote is widely seen as a triumph for Mr Arafat. Though it may not increase his popularity among Palestinians, it has certainly boosted his standing among Israelis, many of whom had despaired of seeing any fundamental change in the PLO constitution.

The Israeli government was overjoyed by the news from Gaza. The prime minister, Shimon Peres, called elections on May 29, facing the decision "a very substantial change in a historic step".

The governing Labour Party responded yesterday by dropping its long-held opposition to a Palestinian state. There is a widespread expectation in Israel that Mr Arafat will be rewarded by speedy progress towards Israel's long-delayed withdrawal from most of the West Bank city of Hebron.

High military sources, quoted in the well-informed Hebrew press, said the withdrawal could take place as early as this weekend, and be completed in 12 hours.

Israel promised to hand over to the self-rule authority all Palestinian cities in the occupied West Bank. Only Hebron remains to be transferred, and even when it is, Israeli troops will remain in the city centre to protect 400 or so fanatical Jewish settlers who insist on living amid more than 100,000 Arabs.

Imran Khan enters politics

IMRAN KHAN officially entered Pakistani politics yesterday, ending months of speculation.

The former cricket star announced the formation of the Movement for Justice at a press conference in Lahore. "The main objective of this movement is to bring about a change in the country by demanding justice, honesty, decency and self-respect," he said. "I have entered politics because... when the country

is moving toward disaster, no one can sit on the sidelines. Analysts say Mr Khan could pose a real challenge to Benazir Bhutto's ruling Pakistan People's Party and to the opposition Muslim League.

He did not announce his new movement's platform, but he has been linked to some fundamentalist Muslim groups. Fundamentalists hope that Khan, with his Oxford education, will make their movement more acceptable - AP.

Advertisement for Woolwich Direct mortgage. Text: "You're never too busy to get a better mortgage." Includes a table of mortgage rates and contact information: 0645 75 75 75.

Advertisement for the movie 'The Birdcage' featuring Robin Williams and Gene Hackman. Text: "...ROBIN WILLIAMS... GIVES HIS BEST PERFORMANCE FOR AGES. NATHAN LANE... IS A REVELATION." Includes showtimes and cinema locations.

Small text at the bottom of the mortgage advertisement providing legal disclaimers and terms and conditions.

Small text at the bottom of the movie advertisement, including cinema names and contact details.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, partially obscured and mostly illegible. Visible text includes "teche", "centre", "evidence found", "The One That", "versions of".

Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom center of the page: "مكتبة من الاجل"



Peace hopes fade as Dudayev's successor brands Yeltsin a criminal and vows to fight to the bitter end

# Chechen leader pledges 'holy war'



David Hearst in Rochni-Chu, Chechnia

**T**HE new leader of the Chechen separatist cause, Aslan Maskhadov, called last night for a jihad against Russia, saying that only through war could his people achieve independence from Moscow.

In a long monologue, the quietly spoken Mr Yandarbiyev declared: "They say the Chechen people are buried. We are not buried... I will take the lead in a war, in a jihad of the Chechen people, in the name of Allah and in the name of the freedom of the Chechen people."

This sounded the death knell for the peace initiative Mr Yeltsin launched at the beginning of the month when he promised a limited withdrawal of troops from Chechen villages which signed the peace agreement.

Mr Yandarbiyev said he had been appointed by "the state committee of defence and cabinet of ministers", a formula which skirted round the rumoured misgivings of such increasingly independent war lords as Shamil

Basayev and Ruslan Gelayev. He went out of his way to brand President Yeltsin a criminal. He called the Russian state "a mafioso-like creation" and said that responsibility for the war and destruction visited on the Chechen nation lay with Mr Yeltsin himself.

"We consider him guilty. He was guilty at the start of this war and I am convinced of that and the whole world is too."

He appeared to threaten Mr Yeltsin's life, thus closing the door firmly on any attempts to negotiate with the Russian leadership.

Mr Yandarbiyev, formerly the rebels' ideology chief, has never been known for his ability to compromise.

Referring to the Russian presidential palace, the symbol of Chechen resistance, is a huge pile of rubble, among which the old lamp posts still stand erect.

Reactions in Grozny last night were mixed. Many refused to believe that Dudayev was dead, and thought the whole episode an elaborate hoax. Many former fighters found fault with Mr Yandarbiyev, saying he had not stayed in Grozny to organise its defence, that he was not a military man, and that he had little authority.

Nicolai Sambiyev, aged 43, said: "For me he is not an authoritative man. Basayev or Gelayev are." Others said they did not believe he would be anything other than a figurehead.

The centre of Grozny is now a desolate clearance site.

Russian armoured personnel carriers do not daily, even in broad daylight. One fired a salvo into the air at a road junction to warn other cars to get out of the way. The new masters of Grozny shoot first and ask questions later.

An outraged Chechen market trader said: "They even shoot off their guns in time to the music they hear on their head phones, just to inspire fear in us, so that we are in a permanent state of shock."

A woman called Rosa said: "Who is considered a bandit? A cat? A dog? A seven-year-old boy this high? There are two boys who want mushroom picking yesterday. The Russians shot at them, too, and now they are in an intensive care unit. Is that justice?"

San Trayner in Bonn

**G**ERMANY'S chancellor, Helmut Kohl, warning his country that it is living beyond its means, yesterday pushed ahead with controversial public spending and welfare cuts which threaten to trigger a confrontation with the powerful trade union movement.

Following the collapse of talks he had earlier in the week with the unions and employers' leaders, Mr Kohl sought to bypass mounting opposition by appealing directly to the public to support austerity measures intended to make Germany fit for a single European currency, rein in growing deficit spending and ease conditions for firms to sack workers.

In an open letter to the public leaked to the Bild tabloid newspaper, Mr Kohl employed a Thatcherite tone in announcing the austerity measures, and warned of tough times ahead in a country that enjoys the highest wages and social security provision in Europe.

"Some say we can finance prosperity on credit," Mr Kohl's letter stated. "But the state is no different from private life: we can't live above our means."

Referring to Germany's post-war record level of 4 million unemployed, Mr Kohl said labour had priced itself out of jobs.

"If we don't act now, more jobs will be lost and we will be no longer able to finance our welfare state."

In a speech to parliament today, the chancellor is to disclose what is being touted as a blueprint for economic recovery, job creation and growth. His priority is to get public finances in order since

soaring unemployment, increased tax revenues and increased state payments mean that without cuts the government will fall to pass the single European currency tests on budget deficit and public debt in 1997.

The broader aim is to get the economy moving by curbing the high non-wage costs of industry, and tax reform. The measures will include reductions of at least 20 per cent in sick pay, trimming of pensions, raising of the retirement age for women, a freeze on child benefits, and moves to make it easier for small firms to sack workers.

The government is also seeking to impose a pay freeze in the public sector. But negotiations on next year's pay round for 3.2 million public employees opened yesterday in Stuttgart with unions demanding 4.5 per cent rises.

The interior minister, Manfred Kanther, declared that the kitty was empty and that any rises would have to be funded from borrowing.

"Saving is the commandment of the hour," he said. Union leaders vowed to resist the moves away from the traditional German consensus model of corporate capitalism towards American or British "pure capitalism".

The opposition Social Democrats accused the government of moving to dismantle the welfare state, rather than tackling unemployment.

But Wolfgang Schäuble, a close ally of Mr Kohl and the Christian Democrats' parliamentary leader, dismissed such talk as scaremongering. "We've surrounded ourselves with a web of state-decreed welfare that is a straitjacket on motivation, self-responsibility and initiative," Mr Schäuble said. "The web is threatening to rip."

# Clinton claims budget victory

Martin Walker in Washington

**T**HE Republicans yesterday finally agreed a budget for the current financial year, allowing the United States president, Bill Clinton, both to claim a political victory and insist that he could work with a hostile Congress.

"This has been an abysmal process, but the epilogue of this sad story is that when the president and the Republicans sit down on a bi-partisan basis, they can reach agreement on budget issues," Mike McCurry, the White House spokesman, said yesterday.

After months of wrangling, which twice saw the Federal government shut down and hundreds of thousands of workers sent home, the agreement meant that the US formally joined Luxembourg and Switzerland as one of the world's soundest economies.

It will now run a deficit of \$144 billion (£97 billion) this year, less than half of that when Mr Clinton took office. The 1996 budget ends the series of temporary funding measures which have kept the business of American government lurching unrelentingly along since last October.

The budget compromise was hailed by the White House and most political analysts as a victory for Mr Clinton, who managed to preserve a range of domestic reforms which the Republicans had tried to stop by denying them

funds. These included, for example, Mr Clinton's election pledge to put 100,000 extra police on the streets.

He also won a Republican agreement to repeal a measure they had passed earlier to require members of the armed forces diagnosed with HIV to be discharged with the loss of pension rights and medical benefits.

In return, the Republicans won little more than the right to boast that they had cut planned spending by \$43 billion. Newt Gingrich, the Republican speaker of the House of Representatives, claimed yesterday that this was "a great achievement — we have changed the spending culture in Washington."

The other concession to the Republicans will be paid for mainly by the developing world, a commitment that US aid will be withheld from any population control programme that includes or authorises abortion.

"Most of the political gains go to the president," said William Schneider, a political analyst at the American Enterprise Institute. "The Republicans were desperate not to have another government shutdown."

This year's budget agreement lasts until October 1, when the new 1997 budget is supposed to take over. But with just five weeks remaining before the November 5 election, the Republicans are determined to recapture the taxation issue with a new demand for tax cuts.



Galloic emotion... An animated president, Jacques Chirac, reacts to being surrounded by well wishers in Amiens, northern France, during a visit yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: MICHEL SPINGLER

# Red centre of Italy rejoices in Prodi's bella vittoria

**John Hooper in Bologna discovers the blend of socialism and Catholicism that lies behind the new governing alliance**

**S**HELTERED from the rain in the colonnade on Via dell'Indipendenza, the Puccini band of Bologna is belting out the old partisan anthem, *Bella Ciao*.

It is Liberation Day, Italy's pre-eminent leftwing festival, in the week of the first leftwing victory in a half-century of restored democracy. *Bella Ciao* is greeted by a sustained burst of applause.

Round the corner in the Piazza Maggiore under a sky the colour of yucca, stone, they are preparing to lay wreaths at the city's

war memorial. Antonietta Negretti has come with her friend whose father was a partisan. She is overjoyed with what she calls a "*bella vittoria*".

Run by communists and their heirs ever since the war, Bologna is Italy's "reddest" city. The main road to the centre from the ring road is called Via Stalingrado.

It is also the town with which Professor Romano Prodi, the centre-left's candidate for the premiership, is most closely associated. It was not where he was born, but where until

recently he lived, taught — and prayed.

"Just down there, at St Stephen's," said a pensioner gesturing with his umbrella. "Prodi and the parish priest, they're great friends. He used to take communion there every Sunday."

Coming to Bologna makes a lot of things about Prof Prodi and the alliance he leads fall into place. From a distance, he seems like the captain of a motley crew — former communists mixed with devout, though progressive, former Christian Democrats like himself.

Here, the two traditions co-exist more vigorously than perhaps anywhere in Italy. While for "red" Bologna April 25 was an opportunity to commemorate the

Resistance, across the square at the basilica of St Petronius, it was a chance for "Catholic" Bologna to hold a convention of the Prayer Groups of Padre Pio, the 20th-century Capuchin mystic.

Such is the strength of these two apparently contradictory forces, you can see them fusing before your eyes. Yesterday's Resistance commemorations began with a mass — at St Stephen's.

It becomes entirely comprehensible that an adoptive son of Bologna should feel able to represent both sets of ideals in government. What helps them to co-exist in Bologna is prosperity.

It is often held up as a show-case for leftwing administration. Gleaming

buses glide over the cobbles between covered stops with electronic display boards telling passengers when the next service is due. None of this, though, would be possible without the prosperity generated by the city's

enterprising and successful businesses. And it is Italy's God-fearing entrepreneurs of whom Prof Prodi has made himself a champion.

Mara Albertassi, the partisan's daughter huddled under her umbrella in the

Piazza Maggiore, thought he would be "especially good for the economy". She hoped that a centre-left government would make it easier for her daughter, who is due to leave school this year, to get a job. She was also counting on it to put an end to cuts in the pension system begun two years ago by the conservative administration of Silvio Berlusconi.

On the other side of the square, Italo Brizzi, the head of the quality control unit at a local firm, also thought that Prof Prodi could help boost the economy. "But in any case, it was time for a change. All we've had for 50 years have been adjustments this way and that. I think we Italians have been, well, a bit too static."

## News in brief

### 'No evidence found' to link Spain's PM to death squads

**S**PAIN'S Supreme Court investigator has found no evidence linking the outgoing prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez, to charges related to a "dirty war" against Basque separatists in the 1980s, court sources said yesterday. The court would not request parliamentary permission for Mr Gonzalez to testify and would "in all probability" issue a writ rejecting the complaints against him. A report by the prosecutor investigating accusations that Mr Gonzalez's Socialist government ran death squads targeting rebels showed there was no proof he was involved, they added.

### Rebel's lesson in betrayal

Paraguay's President Juan Carlos Wasmosy, bowing to public and political pressure, announced yesterday he will not fulfil his promise to make his rebellious army chief defence minister. "The people's will takes precedence over any commitment I may have undertaken," President Wasmosy said, referring to the popular outrage at his earlier offer. "That is why I have resolved to sacrifice my commitment, with all the consequences this

### Baby beaters

A Californian 6-year-old who neighbours said liked to hit children with sticks was in custody yesterday along with two other boys, suspected of kicking, beating and possibly taking a stick to a month-old baby. The baby was in a critical condition — AP.

### Bad cop

A former New Orleans police officer has been found guilty of arranging the death of a woman who accused him of

### Anniversary reminder for Chernobyl

**C**HERNOBYL nuclear power station suffered a minor release of radioactivity on Wednesday night, just short of the 10th anniversary of the world's worst nuclear accident, when the No 4 reactor exploded in the early hours of April 26 1986. A station spokesman said radioactive dust contaminated four places in the machine room of reactor No 3. "As the work was badly organised, radioactive dust contaminated four places. The level of radioactivity rose seven times. There was no radiation of staff beyond norms. But this was a violation of safety rules." The dust was said to come from filters removed either from the pumps used to extract air from the sarcophagus encasing reactor No 4 or, according to another account, from a disused water filtration system between reactors 3 and 4. — Agencies.

### Domestic violence

A Kuwait appeal court sentenced a woman to 10 years in jail for murdering a maid who had refused to clean the house, the Arab Times reported yesterday. — AP.

### Airliner pay-off

Washington has paid over \$100 million (£66 million) in compensation for the 1988 shooting down of an Iranian airliner by a US warship which killed 290 people, an Iranian official said yesterday. — Reuters.

## South African constitution threatened by deadlock

David Barsford in Johannesburg

**P**RESIDENT Nelson Mandela and his predecessor, F. W. de Klerk, are expected to hold urgent talks this weekend in an attempt to break a deadlock which threatens the adoption of South Africa's final constitution.

The impasse in negotiations on the constitution, which has to be agreed by May 9, appeared to contribute to panic on the financial markets yesterday, which saw a record fall in the rand's value.

No one was sure why the currency weakened so rapidly to close the day at 4.430 to the dollar, a drop of 4 per cent from Wednesday's close.

The constitutional assembly — effectively a joint sitting of the two houses of parliament — began voting on the new constitution late on Wednesday night. In terms of the interim constitution under which South Africa has been governed since 1994, the final constitution has to be agreed by May 9, and a referendum could be forced.

Parties yesterday tabled more than 300 amendments to the legislation, but the most serious deadlocks are between Mr Mandela's ANC and its coalition partners, Mr de Klerk's National Party.

The nationalists are fighting for the insertion of a right of lockout — as a counter to labour's right to strike — and provision for single-language education. The ANC opposes the education clause on the grounds it will facilitate racially-exclusive schools.

The major trade union federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions has called for a one-day general strike on Tuesday as a demonstration of popular opposition to a lockout clause. The ANC has been criticised for supporting the call.

The other major proposed change is the replacement of the senate by a 90-strong national council of provinces, its members nominated by regional legislatures.

The ANC and the National Party, which together can deliver the two-thirds majority needed to pass a new constitution, have been criticised for negotiating in private.

**What is striking about the SAS phenomenon is that it is equally available to left and right. LWT's film of The One That Got Away was made by Paul Greengrass, who was associated with both the TV and book versions of Spycatcher.**  
John Daggdale

## Review cover story

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al status

han enters politics

PERFORMANCE FOR AGES  
ION  
by Jackman





Think about the children
One thing worse than divorce is a dire marriage

RARELY can the Commons have heard so much humbug as in Wednesday night's divorce debate. Spurious platitudes were piously piled on specious truisms in a fraudulent attempt to demonstrate family values. Research, hard evidence and expert advice were all ignored by the back-to-basics band who naively believe human behaviour can be changed by parliament. Contrary to the insistence of the Prime Minister yesterday, this was not a debate in which conscience was exercised on important moral principles. Important issues were at stake - improving the lives of children whose parents separate - but not moral principles. Whether separating couples should be required to wait 12, 18 or 24 months before divorcing is not a moral principle but a political judgment. Ending fault in divorce is a moral judgment but this was not introduced by the current bill but by the last divorce act in 1969. The most offensive part of the whole exercise has been the way in which the most moral man within the Government, the Lord Chancellor, has shamelessly been portrayed by immoral opportunists in the Tory party and populist press as a trimmer and unprincipled legislator. Our divorce laws cry out for reform. Divorce is always painful but the present procedure only exacerbates ill-will, resentment and bitterness. The people hardest hit by the present acrimonious process are children. Research suggests 40 per cent are cut-off from one parent within two years of a decree - the equivalent of almost one million children in a decade. Yet successive governments have backed away from comprehensive reform, as though the sixfold increase in divorce since 1970 had never happened. A decade ago the Government's think tank on law reform, the Law Commission, began studying ways of reforming the process. In 1988 it

produced a sane and sensible discussion package, which was republished in 1990 in a refined form. Government white papers and consultative documents followed. This was no gimcrack, knee-jerk bill which Michael Howard is so fond of producing. Perhaps that is why he joined the opponents on Wednesday. The debate over the length of the waiting period typifies the superficial arguments of opponents. Children do not distinguish between separation and divorce. Life for Fergie's children after this month's decree nisi is no different from last month. What children want is a sense of security about future arrangements. As the Government's white paper noted last year: a longer period than 12 months offers no incentive to deal with the past - and an increased period of insecurity about the future. Rarely has a bill been so carefully prepared. Yet still the fundamentalists want to block its progress and even now, after their minor success in extending the waiting time, they are trying to persuade ministers to withdraw the entire package. Not even this government will be so stupid. The reform is on its way - some 1.5 million divorces since the Commissioners first began their exercise. A new more conciliatory process, which will be mediator-directed rather than lawyer-led, will be put in place. The process will lead to less acrimony, better links between children and parents, and perhaps, because couples will be required to contemplate all the consequences of divorce in the waiting period, more reconciliations. Certainly bitterness, hostility and recriminations should be reduced. This in turn should reduce damage to children. The research is unequivocal: far more damage is wreaked by parental conflict than by separation. Only the ideologically blind could have opposed such a package.

The East Asian power game

Sino-Soviet harmony will endure: if grievances are ignored

A BRAND new strategic partnership was announced yesterday in Beijing by Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin. It inaugurates a "new age" for the 21st century. Mr Yeltsin piled on the hype by insisting that "I can't name a single question on which we (Russia and China) would have different opinions". If that were really the case, Sino-Russian relations would have achieved a state of harmony well beyond the reach of Comrades Stalin and Mao. It seems to be the season for proclaiming new partnerships in Asia. President Clinton was in Tokyo last week joining with Prime Minister Hashimoto to reaffirm an alliance which would also be "vital for the 21st century". Without mentioning names, they talked about the need to deal with "sources of instability" in the region. This drew a careful response from Beijing, where the foreign ministry spokesman said he "did not think" that the US-Japan security agreement was aimed at China. But if Japan continued to build up its armed forces that would require, he added, "vigilance among other Asian nations". The Yeltsin visit to China is one way of demonstrating vigilance on a topic which, ever since the first Sino-Japanese War a century ago, has concerned Russia as much as China. The East Asian map demonstrates the persistence of the great power game in its most classic form. The line-up may vary over time: what does not change is the need for the US, Russia, Japan and

China to calculate and calibrate their strategies in this four-sided contest. It is not really such a coincidence, then, that Mr Yeltsin and Mr Jiang should have proclaimed their own new partnership just days after Mr Clinton and Mr Hashimoto affirmed theirs. The game is traditionally accompanied by periodic denials that it exists. All that the participants are interested in, they say, is stability and the free exchange of goods. China is particularly eloquent in denying that it has played the Russian (or in the past the American) card. But this time both Moscow and Beijing want their hands to be a little more visible. Mr Yeltsin with an election ahead must show that the US can't take him for granted. Mr Jiang runs a party whose only surviving ideology is "patriotism". He and his army have been bruised by US opposition to their clumsy performance in the Taiwan Straits. The fact remains that, as the Chinese stressed yesterday, this is not an alliance. There are still some short but highly contentious stretches of border to be demarcated. Mr Yeltsin gave a nod to local Russian objections as he passed through the Maritime province. He mentioned Chinese illegal guest workers and said that the Far East would always be Russian. China has never repudiated Chairman Mao's view that large chunks of it were "lost" to the Russians. In the next century this could still be an area where there are neither eternal allies nor perpetual foes.

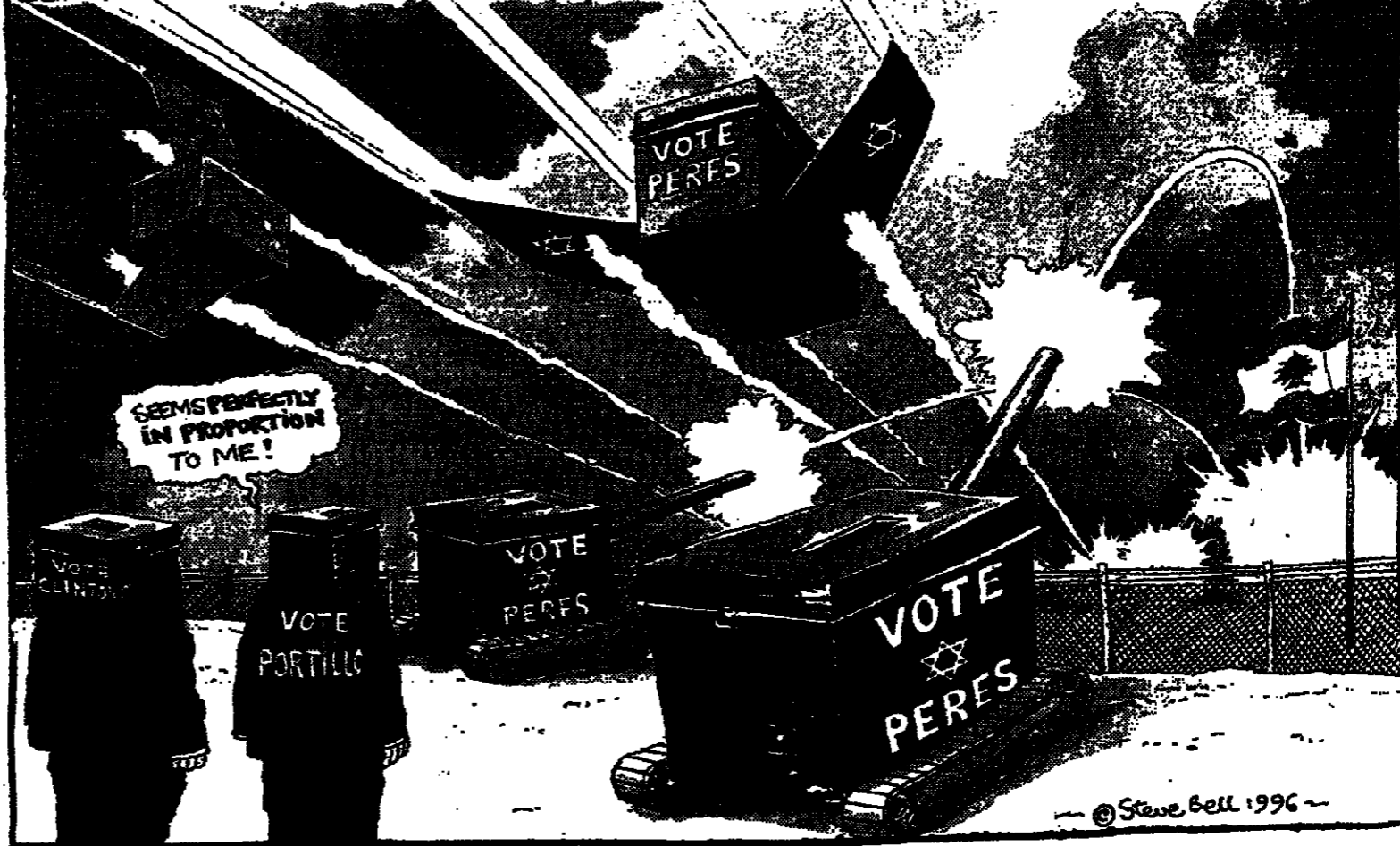
Transport policy going nowhere

It must be special to have upset road lobbies and the greens

YESTERDAY'S transport green paper will wither on the shelf (probably turning really green in the process) while politicians fret about the election. Which is just as well because the proposals are so vague - and with no new resources to back them up - that it would be tough to discern whether they had been implemented or not. The Government stresses five themes. One is a switched emphasis from roads to "public transport" whatever that means now that the railways and most buses are privatised. Recent decisions to expand motorway links around Heathrow while postponing the cost-effective CrossRail link across London are not reassuring. The Government regards the savings arising from the collapse of road building (following public pressure) to be an opportunity to pocket the savings rather than use them elsewhere. A second theme - to reduce dependence on the car in towns - sounds

great: except that the Government is hiving off the responsibility to local authorities (not hitherto among its heroes) while denying them the means. Another theme - better planning of transport infrastructure - will be achieved through "integrating more closely the regional land use planning system with the planning of trunk roads" (well, that will show them). Other themes are equally vague like making better use of infrastructure. Small wonder the both the road and environmental lobbies have been upset at the same time. Even noble aims - like doubling cycle use by 2002 - need qualification. A Commons answer the day before the green paper shows that the miles cycled since 1984 have dropped from 4 billion to 2.7 billion and as a percentage of all passenger miles (excluding walking) cycling has halved. Who, pray, has been in power all this time?

KEEPING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY



Letters to the Editor

Emergency in the wards

WE produce 4,000 new doctors in the UK each year, enough to staff our NHS hospitals and general practice (Doctors' sub hospital jobs, April 23). It is tragic this government has made working conditions and salaries so unattractive that over 30 per cent reject a career in the NHS. Many NHS trusts are seducing doctors and nurses from Third World countries, who spend precious resources on training their doctors only to find they are stolen by a wealthier country. This happened in the 1980s when large numbers of doctors came here from India, and now we are doing it again. It is disgraceful when all this Government needs to do is make the NHS more attractive to UK-trained doctors. We spend just 6 per cent of our GDP on health, half the proportion spent by almost every other developed nation. No doubt there lies the source of the problem. Alan B Shrank, Vice-President, Hospital Consultants & Specialists Association, 20 Crescent Place, Town Walls, Shrewsbury SY1 1TQ.

FILLING vacant consultant posts is proving to be a major problem. The immediate reason is a very significant expansion of the consultant grade in the past five years. In the past, if hospitals wanted an additional consultant then they had to go through an elaborate planning process, which involved Manpower Committees. The purpose of these was effectively to stop consultant expansion, and this inhibition has now been lost. The number of consultants is now moving to a far more sensible level than has been the case in the past. However, the immediate training grade of the senior registrar has been fixed until relatively recently and so the number of trainees for consultant posts has not been able to rise. The root of the problem lies as long ago as 1968, the year of publication of the Todd Report which predicted that by 1994 the nation would need 4,500 medical graduates per year. A succession of governments failed to implement fully the Todd Report and expanded medical school output from 2,500 at the time of the report to 3,600. A deficit of 1,000 doctors per year was thus introduced. However, the replacement of general practitioners retiring during the next years is going to create the most pressing medical crisis of all and many of the population may find themselves without a family doctor. (Dr) David Grimes, Consultant Physician, 2 Lowerfield, Langho, Blackburn BB6 8HE.

AM a midwife working in a busy inner-London hospital. We are very understaffed and consequently work under a great deal of pressure. Our problem is recruiting midwives. The reasons for this are reduction in training places, redundancies among experienced (expensive) staff who used to support junior colleagues; and an inflexibility about employing qualified midwives who need to work fixed hours because of family commitments. One of the most frustrating aspects is that each woman who gives birth in our unit is worth £2,000 to our hospital trust. If the sometimes unsafe and often unsatisfactory staffing levels are publicised then women will understandably want to go elsewhere to have their babies. Our unit's income would drop and our services wobble. Neighbouring maternity units, already teetering on the brink of similar dangerous staffing levels would take them for the cash they represent. Money talks. It pays no one to speak out. Mothers and babies suffer and midwives are at their wit's end. Gay Lee, 26 Kirkstall Road, London SW2 4HF.

A sour taste of beef, with the Government getting roasted

WE HEAR, on very good authority, that a policy is about to be announced for "reduced national beef herd" (OK offers Europe limited cat- the slaughter, April 25). Have we missed the point? The incidence of BSE is largely a problem in the dairy herd (over 90 per cent of herds have had a case). Our well-informed ministers cleverly imparted information on the possible link between BSE and CID in such an unprepared fashion as to cause a complete collapse of beef consumption and a world-wide ban on UK beef and beef-related products. The Government's "defiance" of EU demands to take action in herds with a high incidence of BSE, and merely cull at the end of the working life, means that the supply of milk, butter and cheese will continue (and hence the trade balance will not be further disrupted) and further hefty compensation bills will not need to be faced. The failure to take adequate measures which will satisfy EU and world opinion is driven purely by economic and political reasons and is no longer about beef at all. David R Cargill, (Dr) Lela J Cargill, Walnut Tree Farm, Benacre, Beccles, Suffolk NR24 7LH.

FIRST the Government creates a new definition of the word "safe". Then it behaves as if we still live in a world in which we can send the gunboats out to subdue the natives. Foreign consumers will simply never buy British beef again, no matter what their governments tell them they must do. British consumers who wish to eat safely will grow out of the habit and their children will never grow into it. A F Litten, 8 Parkview Road, Croydon CR0 7DE. ONCE again, with the prospect of a punch-up between the European Union and Great Britain in the offing, we are bombarded with famous images from British history in which the villain is the determined and righteous efforts of Blighty. A more suitable reference might be that of the Suez crisis. For now in matters economic, as then in matters military, Britain is in no position to enforce its will and would be compelled by the economic might of the EU to beat an ignominious retreat. Shane Duffily, 17 Crossgates, Stevenage, Herts.

Barclays' policy on interest

THE article about my brother and me (Lords of the island, April 23) was published unethically and created misleading impressions. It conspicuously failed to highlight the important fact that John Sweeney and the Guardian Media Group, as owner of the Observer newspaper, are interested as defendants in the proceedings mentioned in the article. In spite of the disclaimers, it is clear the Guardian Media Group and John Sweeney are waging a campaign against my brother and me and in the circumstances we have had to bring these proceedings both here and in France to protect our reputations from seriously defamatory allegations about us, and to protect our personal privacy, which is naturally crucial to our family's security. In our view newspapers have a duty to be candid to their readers when they are publishing articles calculated to serve their own interests. Had you properly disclosed the fact that the author of the

article and your sister newspaper were actively engaged in the litigation described in the article, your readers would have understood perhaps why the article was so clearly slanted against us. A good example of this is the misleading reference to our interest in a company which has a small share in an investment fund, part of whose portfolio includes the National Enquirer. This detail was lifted from our complaint to the BBC without explaining, as the full complaint makes clear, that my brother and I have absolutely no control whatsoever over the National Enquirer. Let alone any of its articles. It is particularly disturbing, and an abuse of the power of the freedom of the press, to give the impression you sought to create that we are responsible for articles invading people's privacy published by the National Enquirer. David R Barclay, Le Montaigne, 7 avenue de Grande Bretagne, Monte Carlo 98000, Monaco.

Spare the child

WE, mostly teachers and parents, are greatly dismayed by the case of Richard Wilding (Strike over violent pupil, April 25). Although we completely agree that bad behaviour in classrooms is unacceptable, we do not believe that the job of a trade union was to gang up on one child and his parents. We are opposed to the proposed strike against a child when it is a teacher's job to control children. Richard Wilding is not "the child from hell", nor does he represent the "modern malaise". He is only a 13-year-old boy. The teachers at Glaisdale School are not the only people who are projecting their problems on to children; being a teacher in 1996 is a difficult and stressful job, but it is not Richard Wilding's fault if the resources required to teach effectively are not available. The proposed strike in Nottingham serves only to reinforce the vicious and counter-productive spiral of "blame the teachers - blame the parents" that has dogged the education debate for years. The Government blames teachers for declining standards, then teachers blame parents. Now it seems badly behaved little boys are behind the problem. Neither teachers nor parents are to blame for the problem that Richard Wilding has come to represent. Nor should one child bear responsibility for the failure to deliver high-quality education to all. What we all need is better-funded education. Bernadette Whelan, Wendy Earle, Kate Moorcock, Richard Woolfenden, c/o 223 Highbury New Park, London N5 2TX.



Morris dancers take the floor

MODERN Morris dancing at its best is an exciting, entertaining, creative and contemporary art form. Why then, whenever the Guardian refers to Morris, does it unearth the self-delusions of reactionary dinosaurs? I spoke at a Morris conference on April 20, on the theme of "Morris: Of the 80 dancers and academics present not one would dance" to ensure spring rain for crops. Janet Dowling, President, Morris Federation, 47 Chestnut Avenue, Ewell, Surrey KT19 6SY.

THERE is concern that Morris dancing is becoming a 40-something activity, with few younger people coming in (Bell plea for Morris dancers as plea for new blood falls on stony ground, April 22). The bulge of people who took up dancing 20 years ago in the revival are getting progressively older. Some teams have died out for lack of numbers. Janet Dowling, President, Morris Federation, 47 Chestnut Avenue, Ewell, Surrey KT19 6SY.

A Country Diary

GLoucestershire: With an Easter weekend household of excited little grandchildren all eager to see and celebrate the birth of a lamb, our flock of Herdwicks exercised their well-known talent for drama and irony and waited until all the family had departed, disappointed, before the first ewe lambed. And it was Hermione who came first. Little Tallulah was borne, without trouble, the day after the family had gone their various ways, and we drew breath and waited developments. Hermione was the ewe who, two years back, rejected her first-born lamb, leaped it in the air and stalked off leaving several weeks of bottle feeding. You can see why orphan lambs are sold off for a fiver when you get into this routine. The next year she tried to discriminate between her two ram lambs in favour of Tom over Gerry. Fortunately, Gerry was a very determined little ram and insisted on his rights. So, how would she do this year? All sweetness and light as it turns out. Then a couple of

expensive veterinary interventions proved necessary. Firstly we had the traumatic birth of a ewe lamb to Bess, a first-time lamber at two years old, who was so tight that a caesarian section seemed to be the looming option. That was avoided but the pain and stress of the birth meant that she did not, for over a day, recognise her lamb. We had just about cracked that problem with close confinement and enhanced recognition strategies when, at luncheon on Sunday, poor old Puffball - a dependable ewe who has lambed many times before, showed clear evidence of incipient problems. A veterinary consultation identified the problem - a breeches twin ewe lamb, completely extracted by the young vet and now flourishing. It delayed Sunday lunch but we raised a glass to Puffball and her new lambs as they tottered out into the warm spring sunshine. Meanwhile, other ewes quietly got on with it as nature intended. COLIN LUCKHURST

Law is found guilty of sexism

THE President of the Law Society's denial that women face discrimination in the legal profession (Maverick solicitors' leader lays down law to women on sex discrimination, April 22) offers further confirmation of just how out of touch he is. I welcome the increase in the number of women being recruited to practise as solicitors, but the idea that equality has been achieved and that discrimination in the legal service is a thing of the past is simply not borne out by the figures. I would be happy to send Mr Mears a copy of a written answer I have just received from the Lord Chancellor's Department. It confirms that discrimination against women in the legal profession is alive and well. Of

the 23 Lord Justices of Appeal appointed in the last five years, none were women. Of the 64 High Court judges and 247 Circuit Judges appointed since 1991, only six and 20 respectively were women. It is precisely because there are so few women in positions of responsibility in our courts that women continue to receive unacceptable treatment at the hands of the legal service. Victims of rape are often made to feel it is they who are standing trial. Mr Mears should be leading the call to root out discrimination in the legal profession rather than appearing to aid and abet it. Tessa Jowell MP, Shadow Minister for Women, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

Handwritten Arabic text: صلاوات على الامم



Diary  
Joanna Coles

My friend Stephen Glover becomes more modest with each minute. This week he has been enthralled by the... thoughts on editors' salaries. "How much is an editor worth?" he ponders, crumpling the top of his Bic, before raving at the... salaries and those of the humble hack. For good measure Glover tosses in a few examples: Max Hastings topped £553,000 last year, as editor of the Daily Telegraph, while Paul Dacre at the Mail lugged home £500,000 and Charlie "Gosh" Wilson equaled away £293,000. "In many cases I certainly do not begrudge them," Glover murmurs grandly. "How could I, having made some money out of journalism?" How indeed? As co-founder of the Independent, Glover sold his shares for at least £600,000; on top of that he's recently raked in two lots of redemptions (a year's salary twice) and a smart Mercedes to rev up outside his lovely Oxfordshire home. Such coyness is only to his credit.

I AM intrigued by a tempting conference on offer: "The Future of Journalism: Burson-Marsteller." For a mere £528 per head, they promise the chance to sign up for a "Major One-Day Policy Conference on the Impact of Labour on Business, Industry and the City". Oddly, bearing in mind this is about the impact of the Labour Party — only one out of 14 speakers advertised actually turns out to be associated with the Labour Party. Still, as the brochure assures me, "Bill Cole is a 'senior Labour consultant'". Indeed he is. He was once assistant regional organiser for the London Labour party 1988-92. How much closer to the leadership can you get?

I AM enchanted to hear that far from being discouraged by the stuffy protests which accompanied the first screening of its series The Underworld — about the criminal tendency — BBC1 is planning to show it again! You will remember such screening characters as "Mad Frankie" Fraser, "Taters" Chatham who stealthily broke into the V&A to steal Wellington's sword, and Peter "Gentleman Thief" Scott, whose Memoirs of a Cat Burglar has already been tipped as a future Booker winner. Previous winners, however, may puzzle over the fact that the repeat is shorter and, mysteriously, several of the other cuddlier characters are missing altogether. After investigation, I discover why. They are currently awaiting trial for fresh crimes.

MEANWHILE I'm relieved that Terry Major-Ball has sufficiently recovered from his jet-lag to recount in detail his work schedule from the Melbourne Flower Show. On Friday he was lucky enough to visit the home of Australia's most distinguished columnist, who now runs a winery. "I'm happy to say he's a fan of my book Major Major," Terry tells me, "obviously." Interestingly for me I see from his autobiography, No Brains At All, when he came to England in 1953 to cover the Coronation, he and his wife Jean lived in Wallington just down the road from me! Later I appeared on a variety show called Hey Hey! It's Saturday! I must confess I enjoy doing TV shows — maybe it's my showbiz genes. Quite possibly, Terry. Quite possibly.

I'M glad to see a brief resurgence of the Blitz spirit in Hammersmith on Wednesday night. As Paul Hancock, who lives in the row of houses closest to the bomb site, commented to the Press Association: "I heard a bang. I looked at my wife and we raised our eyebrows."

MY Hollywood friend, the actor Nick Nolte, is safely out of hospital after having his sciatica sipped. "I've had these tightnesses," he tells me cheerfully. "I don't find nude scenes difficult but my testicles just hung so low. Once you're over 50 everything goes down." Indeed it does, Nick. Indeed, it does.



Harlots come out to play again

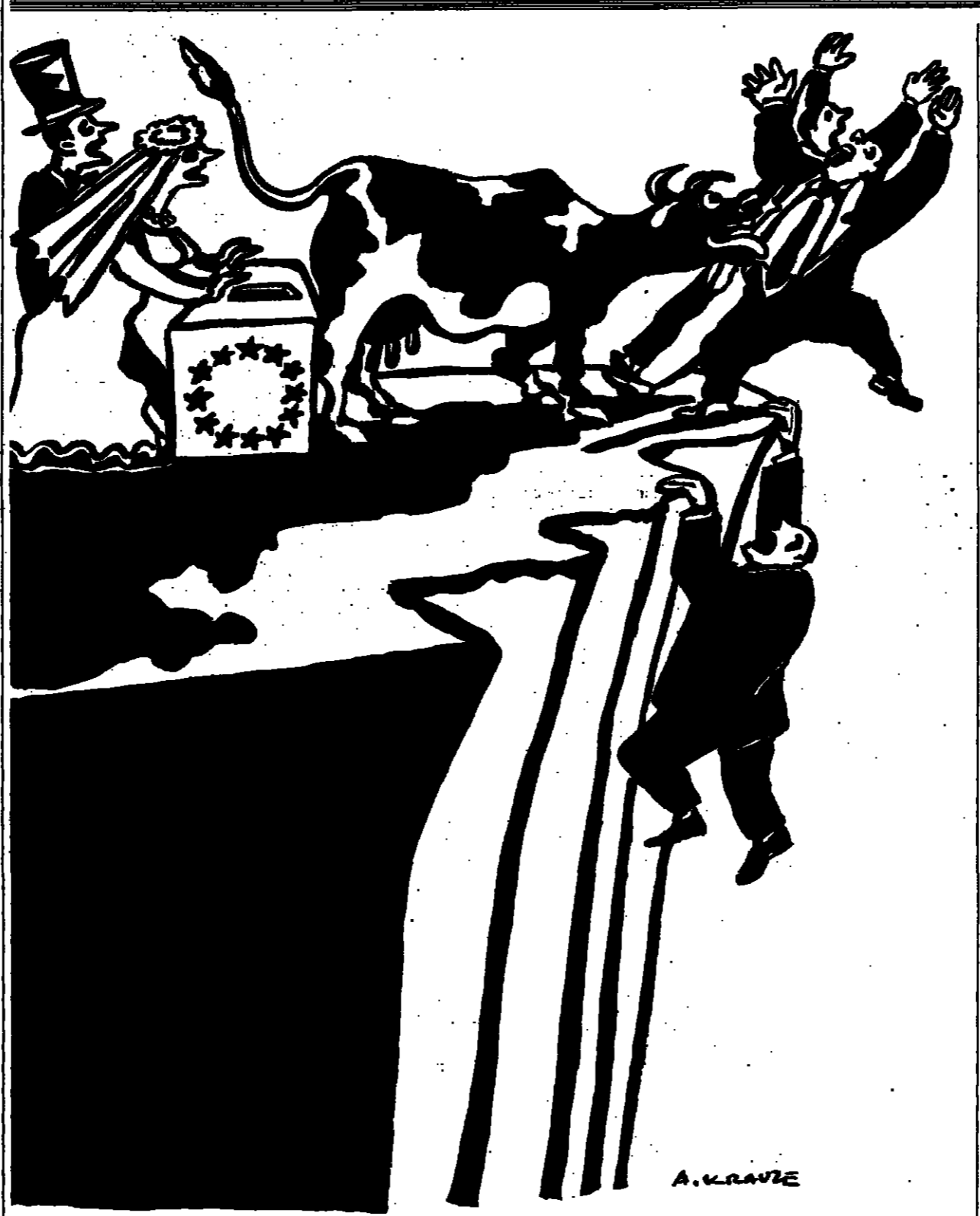
Commentary  
Peter Preston

SELDOM in history have so few owed so much to so many. The Euro-sceptics, long on noise and short on numbers, are hugging themselves as the leader writers pile on the columns inches. Phone the Sun to say No to an "Orwellian super state". Join the Daily Express in kicking "menacing, bullying Helmut Kohl" where it hurts. Stand firm with the Daily Telegraph against an "irreversible act of national betrayal". Heaven bless Jimmy Goldsmith. And don't forget to put the cat out.

ing footsie with Sir James, putting the boot into the "dissenter" that is Johnny. How sentimental, how formidable, how deeply indicative "Can you ever remember such a line up?" asks an ecstatic sceptic. Actually, yes. Or rather I am reminded of one by a couple of highly entertaining books of newspaper history-making out this week. One is Tickle The Public from your very own Matthew Engel. The other is The Great Outsiders by SJ Taylor, a refreshingly jaunty biography of the first Lords Northcliffe and Rothermere timed to celebrate 100 years of the Daily Mail — and recently serialised by that proud organ with the trailer "Continuing the story of the Men who made the Mail, Pages 56-57". The story itself was inevitably a touch selective. It found no newspaper space to mention the United Empire Party. Let me (with help from Engel and Taylor) fill you in. As the 20s turned, Lord Beaverbrook, a rich, ambitious ego with a heard charm, held Stanley Baldwin in rare contempt. Baldwin was an ordinary bloke as Tory leaders went, as ordinary as, well, John Major. Beaverbrook and his unlikely mate Rothermere, kings of the Express, Mail and much else besides, got together. The Beaver had an issue. It was called Empire Free Trade (with protectionist barriers against every one else) — a wounding re-run of the trade debate that had driven Conservative hairies for a century. There was thus an Empire Crusade, and a "party" to match, when Baldwin first half-promised to a bold a referendum on food taxes, and then changed his mind. "British manufacturers and British workpeople are turning out the best goods to be bought in the world", a Mail leader intoned on day one. But our home politicians were letting them down whilst "foreign countries" played dirty. The Express issued "First Marching Orders" to its fledgling "Crusaders". Express readers were required to eat the national loaf — "Empire Wheat, British mills in British bread". The movement, as Sally Taylor observes, preyed on people's fears that foreign businessmen were getting the upper hand, that foreign foodstuffs of all kinds were driving the local farmer out of business, that Britain was on the skids and only draconian measures could stop the slide. In a world where "people often didn't know what to believe — here was something". Beaverbrook's shell party did well in some local elections. "The Empire wins South Paddington" trumpeted an Express headline. It pushed the Conservatives into a humiliating third in the Islington byelection. The press line-up from the Beaverbrook/Rothermere stable in an age before television (or even John Humphrys) was absolutely formidable: the Sunday and Daily Express, the Mail, the Evening News, the Standard, the Daily Mirror, the Dispatch, the Sunday Post. Rupert would love Tony to allow him such critical mass. Baldwin, meanwhile, was

One acrid sentence burst the balloon of self-importance and mischief and rampant ambition

nervelessly tottering on the verge of resignation. The Mail launched a killer strike on his betrayal of his old dad. And then? Then Baldwin, with a little help from Rudyard Kipling, made a byelection speech which ended with almost the only quote of his anybody remembers. "What the proprietorship of these papers is aiming at is power, and power without responsibility — the prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages". One acrid sentence burst



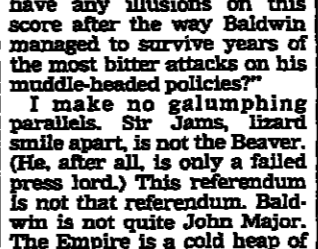
Losing their grip

The Government is staggering from one crisis to another under the weak leadership of John Major, argues Michael White. Things can't go on like this

IT IS not often that Sir George Gardiner, Tory MP for Reigate, speaks for the nation. But in this week's edition of the Surrey Mirror, the Thinking Plotters' Plotter observes, without apparent irony, "Some of these people must have a death wish." Sir George was referring to Tories in his constituency who are trying to deselect him for excessive Euro-scepticism and other thought crimes. But he could have been talking about any number of colleagues at Westminster: in assorted permutations, Tories are rightwing pro-family Tories who engineered Wednesday night's defeat on the divorce bill, which ministers ineptly tried to shrug off yesterday — that is, those ministers who did not actu-

ally vote for the defeat (34 of them, four of cabinet rank, plus 131 backbenchers). It was also rightwingers who staged a publicity coup for Iain Duncan-Smith's token bid to tame the powers of the European Court of Justice. Defeated by 83 votes to 77, mainly Tory and Unionist votes, the event was of marginal symbolic importance. Yet it led Wednesday's Times and Telegraph. By the same token, it was the leftish Ken Clarke who predicted that Starts SE would be the by-election which restored the feel-good factor, and leftish Stephen Dorrell and Michael Heseltine who raised expectation of "retaliatory" steps against Europe over the beef ban, only to climb down when the lawyers said it might be tricky. At

My new role as Clare Short's minder



Bel Littlejohn

THERE'S one thing we can all agree on. She's a lovely lady. A truly lovely, lovely lady. One of the loveliest ladies in modern politics. With her Brummie wit and rough-and-ready Brummie charm, Clare Short doesn't have an enemy in the House, except for those who can't stand her. But she's got to learn that being lovely isn't everything when it comes to winning elections. To put it kindly, I sometimes wish she'd take more notice of that timely catchphrase, first coined by the late, great Nye Bevan: "Why don't you just shut your big fat gob?" But as I was saying, Clare Short's a lovely lady. I've known her for nearly two decades now — that's almost 20 years in metric. She first rose to fame way back in the early 70s as Clare Long, the Brummie with the heart of gold who co-managed the hairdressing salon at the Crossroads Motel with Vera Downend in the long-running TV series of the same name. Vera was the tough, the hard-headed businesswoman, and Clare was the more reckless and impulsive one, given to shouting her mouth off at customers and then regretting it later.

the house". But Clare isn't having any of it. She wants to charge him double. "Any road up, it can afford it, can't it?" she exclaims in her lovely Brummie accent. At this point, the Home Secretary, who has overheard their negotiations, steps into the debate. "I'm sure we can arrive at some reasonable compromise," he purrs. Vera then reminds them both of the principles of collective responsibility. Clare, she maintains, has spoken out of turn. Clare stands corrected, the Home Secretary leaves without paying a penny and Vera re-establishes her authority. At this, Clare exits in a huff, just as Benny — played by the struggling young actor John Prescott — enters wearing his familiar woolly hat. "Blimey, what's up with her?" he asks. Vera explains the position. "Well in my opinion," concludes Benny with a shake of his head, "you come to a collective agreement about something, you have a responsibility to observe it. If not, Clare'd better reconsider her future in this salon." The camera freezes on the shocked face of Vera. Theme music. Titles. End of episode. Stirring stuff, prophetic in its way, and it has remained in my mind ever since. Who'd've thought that, 21 years later, the very same couple — John and Clare — both of them having left Crossroads Motel so many moons ago and both now occupying senior positions at the heart of New Labour, should once again come to blows in such similar circumstances? AS Peter Mandelson has already made plain, anything if it ain't about lowering taxes for the better-off, and it's high time Clare — lovely, headstrong Clare — began to realise this. If ever we're going to be able to do anything to help the poor, the homeless, the elderly, the sick and the underprivileged, it'll only be after we have done something to assist the average healthy young family with two crippling expensive homes, whopping financial outgoings and the additional burden of two or more children in private education. Strictly between you and me, Tony and John have asked me to keep a gentle eye on Clare. It's for her own good. She's got one helluva lot to offer New Labour in terms of a bubbly personality, but frankly politics is just not her. Clare's future in the New Labour shadow cabinet remains assured, but from now on in the brand-new position of "Trade and Industry Spokesperson (Staples)". Okay, she might seek to use her new position to argue for free staples for the disabled, or more expensive staples for the better-off. But we can handle it. After all, every government needs its hot-heads, and hot-heads don't come any lovelier than Clare.

alist, that is. Why? For several reasons, of which Mr Duncan-Smith's 10-minute rant is only one element. Sir James Goldsmith, rich, reactionary and magnificently irresponsible, set up camp at the Dorchester to woo opinion-formers and wreck the cohesion of the party. John Redwood duly paid a wary call. Meanwhile the ailing Daily Express finally succumbed to MJD, that myopic form of Mad Journalism Disease, which means the pro-Europeans can expect no more column inches there than they get in the rest of the Tory pack. "Will the Sun back Blair at the election?" is now a question on MPs' lips. None of which need matter decisively if what remains of the Government showed any sign of firmness of purpose. Alas for Mr Major, it has never been his strong suit. The mishandling of the divorce bill is a classic case in point. Tory MPs were outraged by Tony Blair's cheap point-scoring at Question Time yesterday. "It was a free vote. How can that be a defeat for the Government?" ask ministers. Quite easily, actually. Yes, Mr Major signalled a free vote on the bill's "matters of conscience" last November, though the difference between a waiting period of 12 or 18 months is hardly one of profound principle. Besides, it was a Government bill which 34 ministers opposed. IN THEE had old days, before market Stalinism gripped the legislative process, Labour cabinets encouraged backbenchers to introduce divorce or abortion bills. Over Sunday trading and lower abortion times even Mr Major's business managers arranged for MPs to vote on a series of options. It can be guessed. On Wednesday it wasn't. Naturally, the party, in the shape of the chairman, Brian Mahoney, blames the Government too — "I told you so" — though not even Dr Mahoney could have predicted that the Daily Mail would have turned Lord Chancellor Mackay into a fiendish cross between Steve Norris and the late Jimmy Hendrix. As for the five-week-old beef-crisis, the sceptics think it is the defining moment when voters coalesce around their analysis. Clearly the tabloid circulation managers think the same, though most of them also thought John Redwood would topple Mr Major last July. Like the Goldsmith bubble it is intoxicating fantasy. But their bitterness over the cabinet's Grand Old Duke of York tactics is understandable. Why should Tory MPs believe promises to deploy unspecified "other options" if Europe proves unreasonable over the beef ban? We have been here before, over fish, over budgets, over qualified-majority voting. "It requires will-power to gum up the works in Brussels for three weeks, as de Gaulle used to do to get his way. We don't have it," say the sceptics. Will-power or talent, actually. Both are lacking. What Major shows no sign of doing yet is throwing in the towel. That could change. He is a proud, prickly man and by flustering out Redwood last summer he managed to kill off the leadership issue. It has not done him much good. Two options remain if he is to avoid staggering to disaster next spring. He could resign the premiership as he has hinted. Or he could engineer a sudden election gamble to try and wrong-foot Blair. Things cannot go on like this.

£10 BUYS A CHAIN CUTTER

He's chained up through his sensitive nose and made to walk on red hot plates, whilst the back of his legs are left in time to music. Onlookers taunt him and force him to drink beer. Why? Because they're teaching him to "dance" for tourists who pay to watch his agonising wait.

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) rescues 'dancing bears' and helps them to escape to sanctuaries where they can be free of pain and suffering. But we can't carry out our life-saving work without the support of people like you. Your gift of just £10, or whatever you can afford, will help cut the chains of innocent animals. So please send your donation today. He's counting on you.

YES, I WANT TO CUT THE CHAINS!

Please fill in the details below

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Here is my donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_ (Please make cheques payable to WSPA or complete the credit card details below)

Access/Visa/Mastercard/Debit/Amex/Discover/CAF CharityCard please state as appropriate

Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this completed form and your donation to: WSPA, Dept A119, Ferguson Mill, 222A Northampton, NN3 6SR. No stamp is needed. THANK YOU. Registered Charity No. 282200



General Tran Van Tra

Danger man of Vietnam

GENERAL Tran Van Tra, who has died in Ho Chi Minh City aged 77, was the commander of the victorious communist army in the southern half of South Vietnam during the spring of 1975. He was a brilliant military leader, the equal of the far-better known Vo Nguyen Giap, who led the successful war against the French and is generally considered one of the century's great generals.



Nonconformist leader... Tra's history of the war was locked up by the authorities

... Tra's history of the war was locked up by the authorities

THE REMAINING manuscript has never been printed. But Tra's prestige among many older communists, especially in the army, grew even larger, not the least because General Dung's many critics within the military were eager to set the record straight. Dung eventually was removed from the army and the politburo in disgrace.

... Tra's history of the war was locked up by the authorities

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Letter

Brian Baxter writes: I was sorry that the truncation of my obituary notice on David Shipman (April 24), especially references to his major history of the cinema and his book celebrating its centenary.

François-Régis Bastide

France's ambassador of culture

FRANÇOIS-RÉGIS Bastide, who has died aged 69, was famous in France for his radio programme, Le Masque et la Plume. Every Sunday evening from 1952 onwards millions of French people would listen to an hour-long discussion in which four critics would discuss the latest films, plays, books and exhibitions.

... Bastide would handle his speakers neatly, sometimes encouraging the violent denunciations with which one critic would greet anything experimental, sometimes tempting a more timid speaker to be more assertive.

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Birthdays

John Battle, Labour MP, 45; Carol Burnett, actress, comedienne and singer, 60; Charlie Chester, comedian, 82; David Coleman, sports commentator, 70; Jack Douglas, actor and comedian, 68; Sir Gordon Downey, political ethicist, 68; Duane Eddy, guitarist, 58; Jimmy Giuffrè, jazz clarinetist and composer, 76; Justin Gostling, philosopher, principal, St Edmund Hall, Oxford, 66; Prof Margaret Gowing, scientific historian, 75; Stuart Higgins, editor of the Sun, 40; Sir James Holt, medieval historian, 74; Dr Lynne Jones, Labour MP, 45; Dr Anne McLaren, biologist, 69; Prof Wilfrid Mellers, composer, 82; Oliver Miller, former Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, 73; Peter Schaufuss, director of ballet, Deutsche Oper, Berlin, 48; Dame Margaret Scott, founding director, Australian Ballet School, 74; Kathleen (Koo) Stark, actress, photographer, 46; Roger Taylor, rock drummer, 38; Andrea Temesvári, tennis player, 30; Dr Ian Twinn, Conservative MP, 46; Derek Warburton, actor, 62; Morris West, novelist, 80.

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Jackdaw

Bente Hogh lives with David Irving, the historian who has his own special slant on Hitler and the Holocaust. Bente doesn't agree with David's views but she is the mother of their child. She told Nicholas Farrell of The Spectator about living with David: Once, several years ago, I asked Mr Irving if he was mad. He said that operating as he does on the outer edge of intellectual hyperspace, he sometimes wondered, but unfortunately he had no thermometer to stick into his brain to find out. Did Mrs Hogh think the father of her child was evil? "He definitely has an evil streak in

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Sir William Wilkinson

Conservation with passion

WILLIAM Wilkinson, who has died aged 63, had a distinguished career in business but his real passion lay in the enjoyment and conservation of nature. He was a dominant figure in nature conservation, and could have truly claimed to have changed the world for the better, though he himself would have been too modest to do so.

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Wilkinson... reversing decades of despoliation

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Epitome of the cultured Frenchman... François-Régis Bastide

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Death Notices

LOKESWOOD. On April 24th 1993 at Deptford, Kent, France, aged 82, Mrs. Gertrude Lokeswood, nee Gurney, widow of the late Mr. Gurney, who was a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. She is survived by her husband, Mr. Gurney, who was a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. She is survived by her husband, Mr. Gurney, who was a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

In Memoriam

28TH APRIL 1993, in past and future victims of Chernobyl. It doesn't have to happen again. Thank God the future's solar.

Engagements

MR. ABBATLEY and Mrs. ABBATLEY, The... announced the engagement of their daughter, Mrs. ABBATLEY, to Mr. ABBATLEY. The wedding will take place on...

Novel's wake

George Steiner is worrying about the novel. In Prospect. We are getting very tired in our novel writing; that makes perfect sense, there is nothing...

Ad nauseam

LORNA Russell in Everyman has been taking a close look at television advertising:

... Wilkinson, who has died aged 63, had a distinguished career in business but his real passion lay in the enjoyment and conservation of nature.

of a modern... The art...

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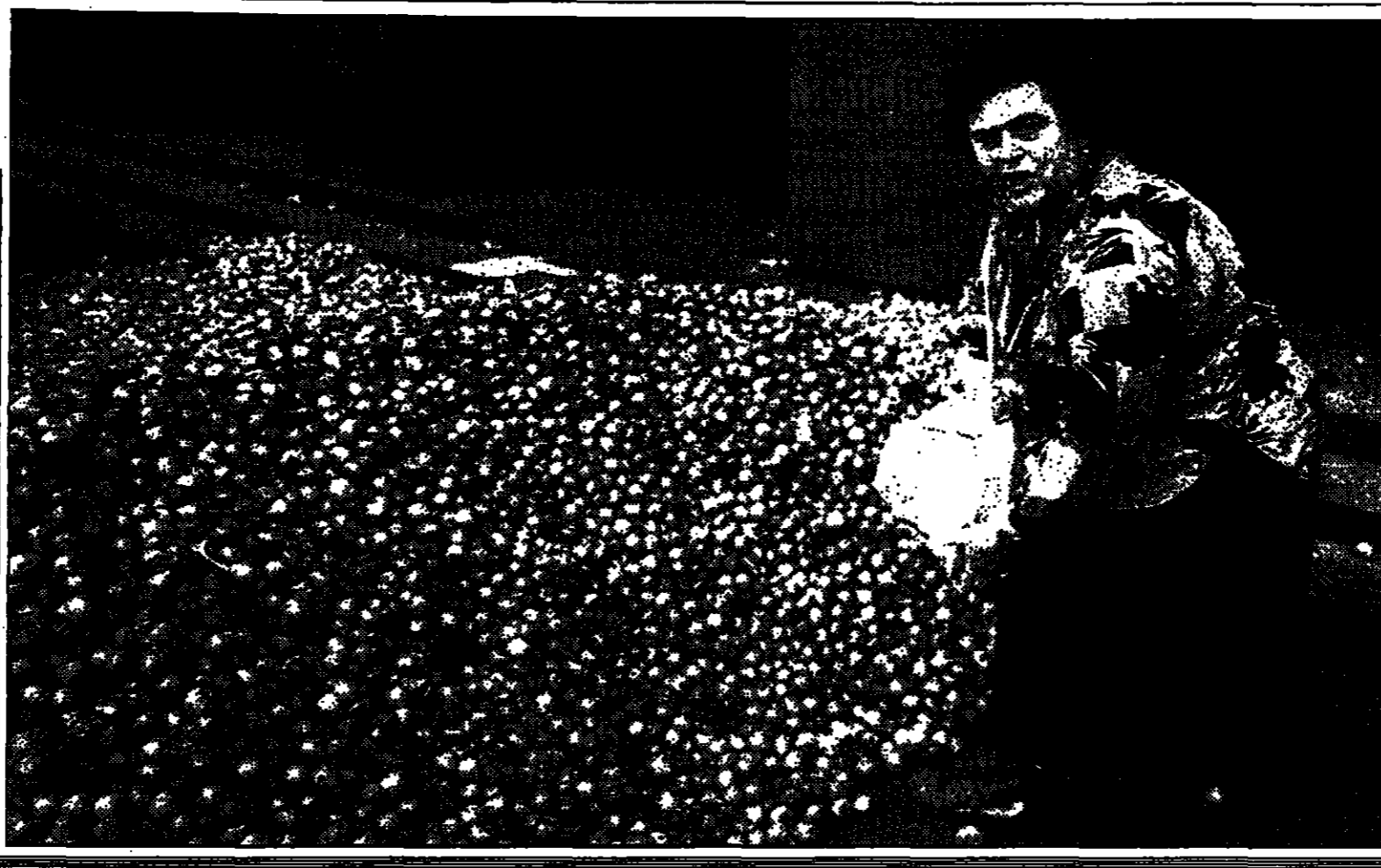
Financial Editor: Alex Brummer  
Telephone: 0171-239-9610  
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Those who know their onions hit out at the EU

Nadia Rybarova in Prague

IN A CRY for help at being sliced out of their own business, Czech farmers yesterday dumped three tonnes of onions on the agriculture ministry steps. Farmers are faced with throwing away about 20,000 tonnes of onions this year as their home-grown produce is priced out of the Czech market by inferior imports from European Union countries, according to Josef Krizek, an opposition Czech-Moravian Union MP. The Czech Republic, itself anxious to join the EU, is complaining of the union's trade practices, such as the protection of domestic industries against imports from central Europe, and the sale of excess produce from the EU's subsidised farms. "We are just the EU's garbage can," Mr Krizek said. For at least one civil servant (pictured right) the farmers' surplus onions helped save on the green-grocery bill. — AP

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAL DOLEZAL



Notebook

Sterling qualities brought to fore



Edited by Mark Milner

SUDDENLY the pound is acting out of character. Despite historically low interest rates, it is taking off — yesterday putting on a pfeign against the German mark to close at over 2.31. Few pundits expect sterling to weaken in the near future. In part, the Bundesbank is the cause. The German authorities have seen the impact of a strong mark on the nation's industry and jobless rates, and are taking action. Rube officials now sound as though they are making every effort to talk down the mark, and last week's half-point cut in German rates came after figures showed M3 — the worshipping money supply measure — soaring. But it is possible that a more fundamental reassessment of the value of the pound is taking place on dealing floors. After sterling's ejection from the exchange rate mechanism in 1992, almost everything went as expected: strong exports and cheap money. Except for one crucial, almost universal, prediction that the gains would be frittered away in spiralling wage demands and soaring inflation. In fact, the unthinkable happened. Britain became more competitive — and didn't waste it. Inflation is well below 3 per cent, producer prices are stagnant. All of which makes the UK currency look like a buy and the markets have, albeit belatedly, cottoned on. Sterling's strength also knocks down the argument against base rate cuts — cited often by the Bank of England — that a weak currency means imported price pressures. For once, Britain could be facing a combination of the pound on the way up and interest rates on the way down. Now that makes a change.

line with "best corporate governance practice", clearly plans to do the same this time round. True, some changes have been made but it is worth remembering that when British Gas decided last year to award its boardroom an average pay rise of 45 per cent this was justified as necessary to retain executives of international calibre. Cedric Brown was given a 70 per cent rise because he was the "right man" to lead a large and complex company. Just one year later, four executives, including Mr Brown, will have left the group, taking with them pay-offs of about £545,000. In addition, the company has taken the unusual step of paying executives £100,000 to join the group. Most of this was in place before Greenbury began its investigations and it may, as British Gas argues, all be within the spirit of the Greenbury code and the not worthy of being put to a shareholder vote. Such a view makes a mockery of Greenbury. The company, and other privatised utilities, should think again.

Tax penalty

JOHN Major must feel like a football manager staring relegation in the face. Teams heading for the drop are always the ones that most need the run of the ball and consistently fail to get it. Star players are injured or suspended at crucial times, the team hits the woodwork more often than the goal, and the referee's decisions go the wrong way. Yesterday the Appeal Court handed down a ruling whose nearest sporting equivalent would be a referee who overrules his linesman on a crucial decision. It decided that, contrary to lower court rulings, Customs and Excise had been wrong to charge VAT on "interest-free credit deals".

Just how much money the Treasury will have to hand back is not clear. Customs & Excise reckons estimates of £5 billion were "very much on the high side" but it would still run to billions. There could be even worse news in the pipeline. Other pending tax judgments could add substantially to the amount of money the Treasury may have to hand back.

For the Government the cause for concern is not so much that the ruling has gone against the Revenue. It can always find other ways of raising money.

The damage sustained in the Appeal Court yesterday is the real test. It could prove an important factor in preventing the Chancellor delivering the tax cuts many of his backbenchers — any hopes of cheaper borrowing notwithstanding — believe essential for the conservatives to have any chance of winning the election.

No one should shed any tears for the Tories. A Government's prospects of re-election should hinge on more than the way in which VAT has been collected on interest-free credit deals over the past 23 years.

Paying no heed

IN TERMS of executive pay, British Gas is the company we all love to hate. It was one of the foremost examples in ministers' minds when the Greenbury committee was established last year to help dig the Government out of a hole over the executive bonuses which had become a hallmark of the privatised utilities.

Greenbury was, in the event, less harsh on the privatised companies than many had expected. But the report made it quite clear that the reward structures for executives which were already in place should be thoroughly reviewed, voluntarily adjusted and discussed with shareholders at the first annual general meeting. British Gas, which saw out last year's agm controversy by maintaining that it was in

Sterling at seven-month record • High street sales edge upward • Pressure on for interest rate cut

Soaring pound aids Clarke

Richard Thomas Economics Correspondent

STERLING hit a seven-month high on the foreign exchange yesterday, fuelling hopes that the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, would cut interest rates to keep the economy on the boil. Hints that further reductions in the cost of German borrowing could follow last week's surprise half-point cut sent the pound soaring against the mark, to close almost a pfeign up at 2.3111. City analysts say the

strengthening pound would give Mr Clarke the ammunition he needs to overrule the Bank of England — which has been concerned about the inflationary implications of a weak currency — and cut base rates from the present 6 per cent. The pressure on Mr Clarke was further fuelled by official figures out yesterday showing a smaller-than-expected rise in retail activity last month. The Office for National Statistics said the volume of high street sales rose by 0.4 per cent in the first three months of the year — the slowest rate since last November — while March sales were just 0.2 per

cent up on the preceding month, after a revised jump of 0.8 per cent in February. Dealers, initially wrong-footed by the worse-than-expected data, were soon distracted by comments from Bundesbank council member Franz-Christoph Zeidler, which sparked speculation that last week's reduction could mark the start of aggressive policy easing by Germany's central bank. "The cut created more room for manoeuvre, rather than exhausting it," he said. This left further cuts on the agenda, he said. Gerard Lyons, chief economist at DKB International,

said that markets were reacting to a deliberate attempt by the Buba to bring down the value of the mark and ease the pressure on industry. City analysts said the combination of a stronger pound, slowing domestic economic growth and political pressure would force the Chancellor's hand on rates. Jonathan Loyne, UK economist at HSBC Markets, said: "Consumers are returning to the high street — but the economy still needs rate cuts, and industry needs them desperately." Some economists have pencilled in a cut when the Chancellor meets the Governor of

the Bank of England, Eddie George, on May 8, if gross-domestic-product figures for the first three months of the year — out on Monday — are weak. Although City analysts noted that the sales figures continued to show an increase, the slowdown in the rate of improvement — combined with evidence of a stagnating manufacturing sector — made an interest rate cut more likely. Treasury officials said the figures were encouraging, indicating that confidence was picking up. A spokesman noted that sales between January and March were 2.1 per

cent higher than the same period last year. "These figures confirm the upwards trend," he said. The Treasury pointed to the pattern of spending, which shows people more prepared to buy expensive items, as evidence of growing optimism. Sales of household goods rose 1.1 per cent in last month, according to the Office for National Statistics, compared with a rise of 0.1 per cent in supermarket sales volumes. Clothing and footwear stores attracted new custom after vigorous price-cutting, with sales up 1 per cent between February and March.

Warburg in shares sale scrutiny

Patrick Donovan, Paul Murphy and Ian King

CONTOVERSY last night surrounded the £2.1 billion Rentokil bid for BET on the eve of its closing deadline as the Takeover Panel attempted to decide whether one of the predator's key financial advisers, SBC Warburg, had broken market rules over a "backdoor" share sale. Rentokil, the pest control and security group, is expected to clinch control of BET's industrial services empire when the votes are counted today. But the bid target was still attempting to rule invalid a 2.7 per cent block of its own shares on the grounds that they were traded by SBC Warburg. BET appealed for the Takeover Panel to mount a full investigation on the grounds that SBC Warburg was prevented in dealing in any company with which it is involved as a financial adviser. The share stake was subsequently bought back by Rentokil itself as part of a market "raid" on the bid target which captured nearly 7 per cent of its shares in a single day's trading. The financial advisers Barings insisted that the disputed deal, which involved the sale of 27 million BET shares controlled by SBC Warburg, breached Rule 38 of the "Yellow Book" code on contested bids.

This states that any "market maker connected with an offeror or the offeree company (during a take-over bid) must not carry out any dealings with the purpose of assisting the offeror or the offeree company as the case may be." SBC Warburg is believed to have sold the share stake which it carried on its own books within the proprietary trading operation. This is kept strictly separate from the Rentokil takeover bid by "Chinese walls". SBC Warburg last night refused to make any comment. The disputed transaction involves a market "raid" on BET shares by Rentokil on April 23. Retailpac, a subsidiary of Rentokil, bought a total of nearly 65 million BET shares, representing around 6.7 per cent of the entire company. It is understood that around 32 million of these came from two institutions, FDM and Sun Life. But a further 27 million were sold by SBC Warburg Market Makers to Salomon Brothers. The US investment bank then sold 24 million shares back through Rentokil's own broker, Hoare Govett to Retailpac. BET pointed out that despite the "backdoor" share deal, Rentokil publicly said that the raid had been carried out. "In response to approaches received from BET shareholders", BET's advisers, Barings were last night summoned to meet Takeover Panel officials.

PowerGen threatens retaliation after Lang's takeover blackball

Chris Barrie

POWERGEN was embroiled in a furious public row with the Government last night when it emerged that the electricity generator may force a Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into the entire industry by dropping an undertaking to foster competition by disposing of two power stations. PowerGen's hard line stance sent relations between the Trade and Industry Secretary, Ian Lang, and company chairman Ed Wallis to a new low. The row follows what Mr Wallis called the Government's "incomprehensible" decision on Wednesday to block PowerGen and National Power's wish to buy regional electricity companies.

The PowerGen board is due to meet shortly to consider refusing to complete an agreement to sell 2,000 megawatts of plant to Eastern as planned. Industry sources suggested that an MMC inquiry would have to be widened to include all generators, damaging the Government's July privatisation of nuclear power. City sources agreed last night that a referral would kill the nuclear sell-off or wipe millions off its value. One analyst said: "The Government by this refusal to complete the deal — which was subject to approval of PowerGen's bid for Midlands Electricity — would cause the watchdog to refer PowerGen to the MMC."

But National Power, its larger rival, said yesterday that it would sell 4,000 megawatts of plant to Eastern as planned. Industry sources suggested that an MMC inquiry would have to be widened to include all generators, damaging the Government's July privatisation of nuclear power. City sources agreed last night that a referral would kill the nuclear sell-off or wipe millions off its value. One analyst said: "The Government by this refusal to complete the deal — which was subject to approval of PowerGen's bid for Midlands Electricity — would cause the watchdog to refer PowerGen to the MMC."

PowerGen is understood to feel that it has little to lose from an MMC inquiry, given that the panel cleared the generators' takeovers, only to be overruled by Mr Lang. The DTI said that the disposal of generating plant and Mr Lang's decision to block the takeovers were not connected in any way. A spokesman said: "If they wish to challenge (the disposal), it is a matter for the industry regulator." Eastern Group's executive chairman John Devereux said that he could see no reason why the disposal should not proceed. He said that disposal of the plant was an "absolute requirement" by the industry regulator.

Enter the Dragon offer

As the handover to Chinese rule in Hong Kong approaches, the Guardian Finance team's comprehensive reports on the prospects for the colony are now available in booklet form for £2.50, including postage and packing. Please write enclosing cheque or postal order, payable to Guardian Newspapers, to Enter the Dragon offer, City Office, the Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, LONDON EC1 3ER

Job with a big future

Don't be fooled by the quiet start, Dan Atkinson tells tunnel debt manager

EASY TO earn £25,000 a year backed yesterday for anyone with a smattering of French and some experience of foreign-currency borrowing — Eurotunnel is advertising for a "debt manager". This should be a Pullman-class cushy billet, not because the Channel tunnel operator does not have any debts (it has £2 billion worth) but because it hasn't paid a sou in interest since last September. The lucky candidate ought, in theory, to have little to do in the way of management, feeding him to enjoy the staff benefits: car allowance, pension, 25 days' leave, health care, pension scheme, sports and social club, and, of course, subsidised cross-Channel travel on Le Shuttle. But the small print of yesterday's advertisement made clear it wouldn't be all shuttling. Eurotunnel's long-suf-

fering creditors will expect repayments to resume at some point, and the job description notes ominously that the appointee will have to play "a key part" in "implementation of the future borrowing structure". Should he shine in this role, he will have proved a bargain appointment. The "c. £25,000" salary on offer represents approximately 26 minutes worth of Eurotunnel's £2 million-a-day interest bill. However, he should prepare for a certain *froider* when first en-



NatWest Bank in third run-in with regulators

Dan Atkinson

NATWEST suffered its third run-in with City regulators in less than a year when Inro fined the bank £75,000 for administrative failures relating to personal equity plans (PEPs). None of NatWest's 70,000-odd PEPs customers suffered any loss from breaches of the fund management supervisor's rules between November 1991 and February 1995. NatWest said the size and scope of its business helped explain the regulatory problems. Last year Roger Nagloff, former head of proprietary trading at NatWest Securities, was removed by the Securities and Futures Authority from its register, for trading on confidential information. He has since been reinstated by NatWest. The SFA last month moved against Geoffrey Clazbrook, former head of market-making in European equities at NatWest Securities, for concealing losses. The bank said its losses were "minimal".

Fire-prone switch forces Ford to recall 8.7m vehicles

Mark Tran in New York

FORD Motor Company faces a bill of up to \$70 million (£57 million) as America's second-largest car maker moves to replace ignition switches in 8.7 million cars and trucks. It falls just below year's recall of 8.6 million cars, caused by defective seat belts manufactured by the Japanese company Takata, according to Washington safety officials. In all, Ford is recalling about one-third of the 26 million cars it built between 1983 and 1993. A company spokesman said only a "very small number" of the vehicles were likely to have faulty ignition switches. The company is facing eight class-action lawsuits over the fault. Ford's move follows an investigation begun in November 1994 by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Ford said that the cost of replacing the switches, which may short-circuit and catch fire — even when the engine is switched off — is estimated to be about \$100 per vehicle. It added, however, that the actual cost could be as little as \$300 million, because some of the cars involved may no longer be on the road and some customers may opt not to bring in their cars. Ford expects to pay for the recall out of reserves set aside for unexpected events. "We do not expect this to have a material impact on earnings," said Jon Harmon, a Ford official. The ignition switches were made by an outside supplier — United Technologies. Ford said it had not yet decided whether to seek recompense from the supplier, which will supply the modified switches.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.85	France 7.52	Italy 2.304	Singapore 2.08
Austria 1.51	Germany 2.250	Malta 0.250	South Africa 2.25
Belgium 2.310	Greece 2.310	Netherlands 2.500	Spain 1.825
Canada 2.01	Hong Kong 11.25	New Zealand 2.150	Sweden 10.05
Cyprus 0.7050	India 61.65	Norway 9.05	Switzerland 1.80
Denmark 1.55	Ireland 0.94	Portugal 2.275	Turkey 107.536
Finland 7.2375	Israel 4.80	Saudi Arabia 5.84	USA 1.4750

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).











Soccer

David Lacey on the goalless draw and missed chances of Terry Venables' team against Croatia on Wednesday

England look lost without Shearer

BETWEEN now and June 8, when England open the European Championship against Switzerland, there should be a national day of prayer for the well-being of Alan Shearer's groin.

ing a decent list of the finals does not still rest with Shearer would be supreme folly.

crossbar or post three times. In December's 1-1 draw with Portugal Gareth Southgate headed against the bar.

a game under his belt and missed a couple of chances will do him good."

the pre-match talk about a new nation state finding inspiration at Wembley was so much Balkan Sobranie.

Darren Anderson and Shearer all be lost through injuries. Of the three, Shearer is causing least concern.

goal where the capacity for surprise is essential. Until McManaman began drifting into the middle, too much depended on Steve Stone.



Robson... England block

Robson at Boro until 1999

Mark Robson

ENGLAND had an avenue blocked in their quest to replace Terry Venables when Bryan Robson signed a new contract yesterday keeping him at Middlesbrough until 1999.

"I think the England job, if it was offered, would have come a bit early," he explained the England No. 2 yesterday.

Robson, whose present contract expires next summer, said the prospect of more spending money from his chairman Steve Gibson had helped persuade him to stay.

Further evidence that the North-east is the place to be these days came when promoted Sunderland signed up for work to begin on a new £15-million stadium on a disused colliery site.

Golf

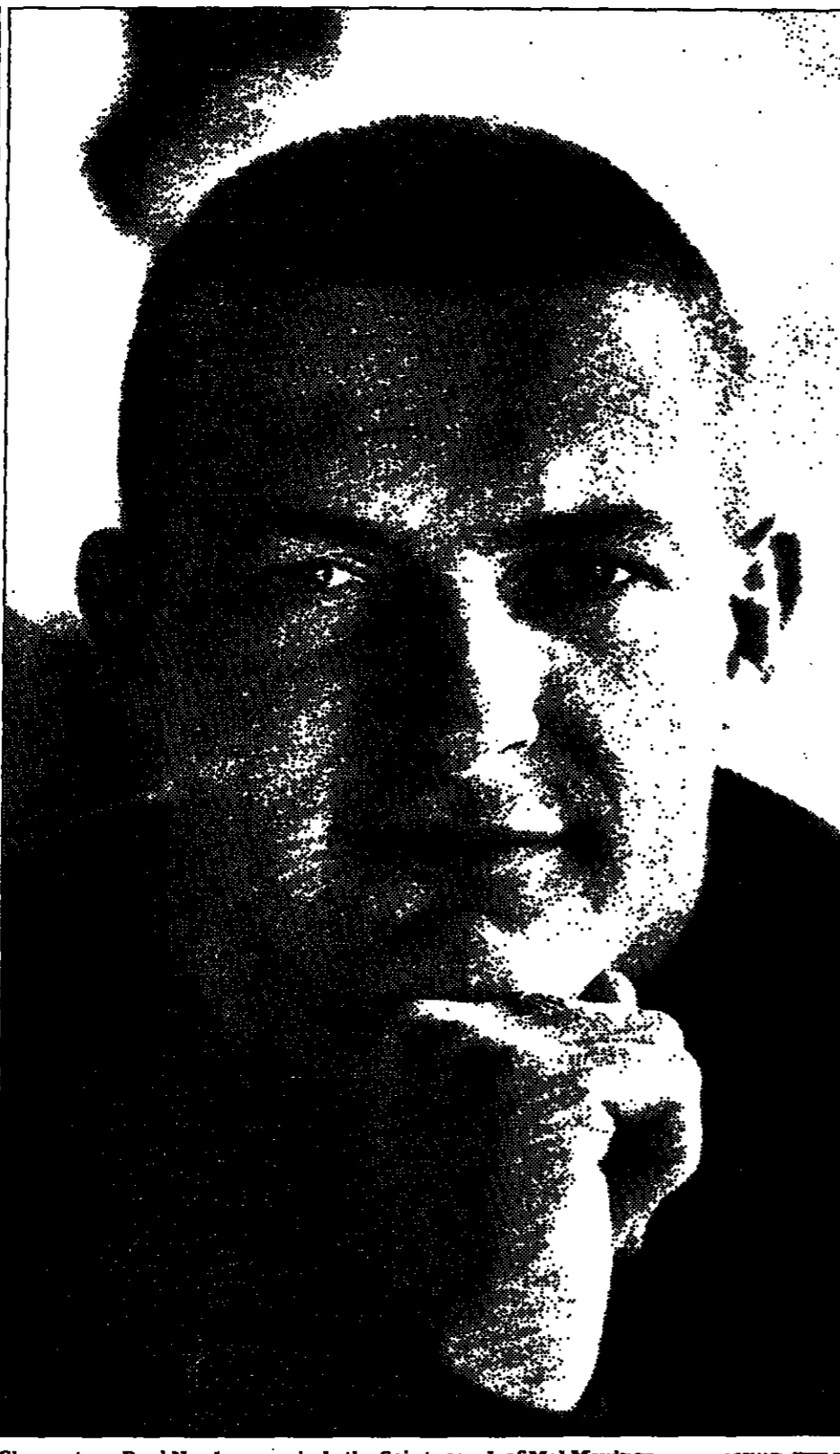
Carlos is next king

Michael Britton in Valencia

NOT for nothing is the province of Valencia known as the orchard of Spain.

Sergio Garcia, the 16-year-old European amateur champion, has already made his mark in Britain and elsewhere.

Yet yesterday Peter Baker, who was hailed as Britain's boy wonder when he beat Nick Faldo in a play-off to win his first professional title eight years ago, was still talking about De Meral.



Class act... Paul Newlove reminds the Saints coach of Mal Meninga

Rugby League

Newlove, a centre of attention

Paul Fitzpatrick on the proven Saint facing his old club Bradford at Wembley tomorrow

AS FAR as Shaun McRae is concerned someone must have been telling lies about Paul Newlove, the St Helens and Great Britain centre who will be aiming to confound his former club Bradford in tomorrow's Skills Cup Challenge Cup final at Wembley.

The Australian coach, who arrived at Knowsley Road from Canberra seven weeks after Newlove arrived from Odsal, had heard some worrying tales about the club's situation.

It has not taken McRae long to appreciate that he has a thoroughbred under his control rather than a prima donna, and he reckons that Newlove is up there with Brisbane's Steve Renouf as one of the best centres in the world.

£10,000 prize put up by the sponsors for the first man to score three tries in a Wembley final.

For St Helens the record package represented a massive psychological breakthrough in the battle with their arch-rivals Wigan.

David Howes, the club's chief executive, says: "The board here were very ambitious but there were certain things we had to do in a short period of time to convince the St Helens public in particular and rugby league in general that we meant business."

His talents make him a leading candidate for the Bradford side tomorrow, go in part exchange.

On the opposite side will be Loughlin, a loser with Saints in the 1987, 1988 and 1991 finals and keen to prove that the club to whom he gave such long and devoted service was a serious error of judgment in letting him go.

There is also the emerging Matt Calland. Two weeks ago when Bradford played St Helens at Knowsley Road, they lost 26-20 but gave Saints a severe fright as their centre Calland ran in a hat-trick.

Maurice Lindsay, chief executive of the Rugby Football League, said: "It is fair to say that our negotiations with the BBC have been lengthy, but we are delighted at the new agreement and the rights fees we will receive."

Advertisement for Renault Megane with text: 'THERE'S NO NEED TO SHOUT' and 'THE NEW RENAULT MEGANE - IT TALKS YOUR LANGUAGE'

Sport in brief

Tennis Spain's top two women players Conchita Martinez and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario have agreed to play in their country's Fed Cup tie against South Africa after sorting out a pay dispute with their federation.

Swimming Scott Miller clocked 32.56sec, the second-fastest time ever for 100 metres butterfly, at

Rugby League

Australia's Olympic trials yesterday. Russia's Denis Pankrotov, who has beaten Miller three times, awaits him in Atlanta.

Tennis

MONTE CARLO OPEN: Third round: T. Muster (Aus) bt C. Moye (Sp) 6-2, 7-6, 4-6, 6-4; M. Hingis (Swi) bt M. L. Anderson (USA) 6-3, 6-4; J. H. L. Murray (GB) bt J. Sanchez (Sp) 6-4, 7-6, 6-3; R. Piang (Sp) bt J. Sanchez (Sp) 6-4, 7-6, 6-3; J. H. L. Murray (GB) bt J. Sanchez (Sp) 6-4, 7-6, 6-3.

Basketball

Of the three best players in England are English, but Tony Dorsey (Birmingham Bulls), a forward from Atlanta, won the Budweiser Player of the Season award yesterday, edging out the England international Steve Bucknall (London Towers) and Roger Huggins (Sheffield Sharks).

Baseball

RED SOX: Steve Austerlitz Zomer Croatia 3, 2; Sweden 2, Belarus 1, Italy 0. NATIONAL LEAGUE: Boston Red Sox (USA) bt Philadelphia Phillies (USA) 5-3, 6-1; St. Louis Cardinals (USA) bt New York Yankees (USA) 5-3, 6-2; J. Ward (GB) bt A. Tordella (GB) 6-0, 6-2.

Ice Hockey

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: Pool A: Group 4 Austria 2, Slovakia 1. Group B: Finland 3, France 3. Pool A: Group 1: Czech Republic 4, Slovakia 2, Poland 2, Slovakia 2, Poland 2, Slovakia 2, Poland 2.

Squash

Paul Johnson, the 23-year-old Londoner who reached the Leaks British Open quarter-finals, has won England selection for next month's European Championships in Amsterdam. He replaces the England No. 1 Del Harris, recovering from a groin injury aggravated during the Super Series finals last month.

Boxing

King offers Lewis a deal DON KING yesterday offered Lennox Lewis a chance to challenge Mike Tyson for the WBC heavyweight title - but only if the Briton takes second place to Bruce Seldon in the queue.

Cricket

THE PARIBUS BRITISH UNIVERSITIES V NEWCASTLE: Derbyshire v Durham, Gloucestershire v Essex, Bristol v Sussex, Southhamptonshire v Minor Counties, Leicestershire v Somerset, Middlesex v Warwickshire v Northamptonshire, Leicestershire v Northamptonshire, Middlesex v Warwickshire.

Results

Soccer

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First Division: West Ham 3, Second Division: Birmingham 1, Southampton 2, Portsmouth 1, Newport AFC.

Rugby League

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERSHIP: Sydney City 62, South Sydney 0.

Golf

YUKESPANA MASTERS (Valencia, Sp): Leading professional scores (GB) in less than 72: Kazuhide Niikura, 66; R. McFarlane; F. Tarnaud (Fr); D. Borrego (Sp), 67; N. Ogrin; T. Johnson; D. B. Baker; A. Cabrera (Arg), 68; G. Hall; R. Burns; A. Sherburne; O. Karlsson (Swe), 69; C. Connor (Fr); J. Gerardo (Sp); G. Turner (NZ); W. Riley (Aus); R. Chapman; W. Weir (SA); C. Sweeney (Sp); J. Payne; 70; D. O'Connell; C. Rocco (It); F. Cox (Sp); D. Fenerty; A. Ferrera (Sp); J. Robson; R. Coler; P. Haugrud (Nor); 71; L. Woodcock; M. Bassacovone (Fr); J. Lomas; M. Farry (Fr); E. Ramero (Arg); J. Payne; M. O'Connell; J. Van de Velde (Fr); M. Pavesio (It); A. Collman; J. Heston; M. Isewi; S. Botschewy; C. O'Connor; 72.

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Snooker

SHEFFIELD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: Sheffield 1st round: J. Williams (Wales) 11-11; J. Hickey (Eng) 10-8.

Boxing

King offers Lewis a deal DON KING yesterday offered Lennox Lewis a chance to challenge Mike Tyson for the WBC heavyweight title - but only if the Briton takes second place to Bruce Seldon in the queue.

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THE PARIBUS BRITISH UNIVERSITIES V NEWCASTLE: Derbyshire v Durham, Gloucestershire v Essex, Bristol v Sussex, Southhamptonshire v Minor Counties, Leicestershire v Somerset, Middlesex v Warwickshire v Northamptonshire, Leicestershire v Northamptonshire, Middlesex v Warwickshire.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, partially obscured and containing various text and graphics.



The Guardian Friday April 26 1996

Snooker
Players rally to Spencer

JOHN SPENCER, the first world champion to be crowned here at the Crucible Theatre 20 years ago, refused to comment yesterday on reports that he had played in various other places in various tournaments...



Seal away... Shirley Robertson, a Scot based in Hampshire, wins the second of her three races in the Europe dinghy class of the Hyères Olympic Week regatta in the south of France...

Cricket
Pollock adds lustre to a restyled cup

THE one-day game has come back under the spotlight less than seven weeks after England were given a lesson in tactics by the eventual World Cup winners Sri Lanka...

COUNTY GUIDE TO THE 1996 SEASON

Derbyshire
Championships 14, 17, 15. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, 11th. Wicket tables: 14th. Captain: Dean Jones...

Essex
Championships 5, 6, 11. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, 9th. Wicket tables: 4th. Captain: Paul Prichard...

Durham
Championships 17, 16, 18. Limited overs: NWT, Round 2; B&H, 10th. Wicket tables: 18th. Captain: Mike Roseberry...

Glamorgan
Championships 16, 18, 3. Limited overs: NWT, 5-6; B&H, 9th. Wicket tables: 15th. Captain: Matthew Maynard...

Hampshire
Championships 13, 13, 13. Limited overs: NWT, R1; B&H, 9th. Wicket tables: 10th. Captain: John Stephenson...

Lancashire
Championships 4, 10, 14. Limited overs: NWT, 4-5; B&H, 11th. Wicket tables: 9th. Captain: Miles Watkinson...

Kent
Championships 18, 9, 8. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, 11th. Wicket tables: 14th. Captain: James Whitaker...

Leicestershire
Championships 7, 2, 9. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, 11th. Wicket tables: 14th. Captain: James Whitaker...

Northamptonshire
Championships 3, 5, 4. Limited overs: NWT, runners-up; B&H, group: SL, 13th. Wicket tables: 7th. Captain: Rob Bailey...

Nottinghamshire
Championships 11, 3, 7. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, 4-5; SL, 11th. Wicket tables: 17th. Captain: Paul Johnson...

Middlesex
Championships 2, 4, 1. Limited overs: NWT, 4-5; B&H, 4-5; SL, 17th. Wicket tables: 1st. Captain: Mike Gatting...

Somerset
Championships 9, 11, 5. Limited overs: NWT, R1; B&H, 11th. Wicket tables: 13th. Captain: Andy Hayhurst...

Gloucestershire
Championships 6, 12, 17. Limited overs: NWT, 4-5; B&H, 4-5; SL, 15th. Wicket tables: 8th. Captain: Courtney Walsh...

Surrey
Championships 12, 7, 6. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, 9th. Wicket tables: 2nd. Captain: Alec Stewart...

Warwickshire
Championships 10, 15, 2. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, 4-5; SL, 3rd. Wicket tables: 8th. Captain: Tom Moody...

Worcestershire
Championships 10, 15, 2. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, 4-5; SL, 3rd. Wicket tables: 8th. Captain: Tom Moody...

Yorkshire
Championships 8, 13, 12. Limited overs: NWT, 5-6; B&H, 4-5; SL, 12th. Wicket tables: 3rd. Captain: David Byas...

Winning ways... Dermot Reeve with the NatWest Trophy. One of two titles Warwickshire are defending this season.



Winning ways... Dermot Reeve with the NatWest Trophy. One of two titles Warwickshire are defending this season.

Tim Boon has gone but that should give Gregor MacMillan a run in the side. Arrivals: V Clarke, J Omond, C Remy...

Arrivals: G Goodwin, AP Grayson, J Grove, TP Hodgson, S Law, SD Peters, JC Powell...

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THE ROYAL MEETING ASCOT RACECOURSE 16th - 21st June BOOK TICKETS NOW ON 0171-413-3355 Ladies Day sold out

Cricket Benson & Hedges Cup News and Scores 0891 22 88+ Derbyshire 21 Middlesex 40 Durham 22 Northants 41 Essex 23 Gloucestershire 42 Glamorgan 24 Somerset 43 Hampshire 25 Surrey 44 Kent 26 Warwickshire 45 Lancashire 27 Worcestershire 46 Leicestershire 28 Yorkshire 48 Complete county scores 0891 22 88 30

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EURO 96 FOOTBALL HOME CRICKET HOME SPORT



Injury scare for Guineas favourite, page 13  
The class of Paul Newlove, page 14

Robson signs new deal at Boro, page 14  
Full county cricket guide, page 15

# SportsGuardian

## SEEDS FALL ON BARREN GROUND IN MONTE CARLO OPEN



## Time to stop system which beggars belief



Paul Weaver

**B**EGGARS, said the man, "should be abolished", adding by way of explanation that "it annoys one to give to them and it annoys one not to give to them". It sounds rather like our leader, does it not, Downing Street's own Mr Bean. But no, those words were uttered by the German philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, whose name sounds like a sneeze, which is about all anyone ever got out of him. Now, it is well known that the Germans are duffers at cricket, but Herr Nietzsche obviously knew a thing or two about the county cricket beneficiaries, those flannelled paupers from the age of feudalism, and he was spot on: they should be abolished. Today marks the beginning of the competitive county cricket season, and for 16 men it will be the toughest summer they have known. Phil Bainbridge, Paul Prichard, Matthew Maynard, Tony Wright, Robin Smith, Chris Penn, Mike Watkinson, Mike Gatting, Allan Lamb, Andy Pick, Richard Harden, David Ward, Alan Wells, Dermot Reeve, Steven Rhodes and Peter Hartley all have benefits or testimonials this year. The season has started and with it all the familiar sounds of cricket: bat on ball, the whispered blandishments of Mr Charles Colvill, and... pennies falling into begging bowls.

Benefits date back to the bad old days of the amateur-professional class schism... when the loyal pro was given a few bob to keep him out of the workhouse. They continued in these days of 200 million TV contracts, because they are ignored by the Inland Revenue. Well, not ignored exactly - in fact the taxman is looking at the increasingly large sums with an avuncular eye - but at least not elbowed. A benefit, after all, is uncontracted, ex gratia. Followers, meanwhile, are happy to reward players who have given years of enjoyment. And it has always suited clubs to keep their underpaid staff loyal with the vague prospect of a benefit season, often unfulfilled. This usually comes after about 10 years as a capped player and helps plug up the county game with time-servers. This month the admirable Cricketers' Association has set up a pension fund which in a generation or so will compensate those players who have not enjoyed a benefit. Graham Gooch will not be in need. Last weekend Essex revealed that Gooch received £289,371, in addition to the £153,906 he got in 1985 - worth about £233,000 today. Mike Gatting's 1988 benefit brought him £205,000, or £278,750 in today's money. In 1985 Geoff Boycott earned £147,854 (£241,890), and going back to 1904 the great Yorkshire and England all-rounder George Hirst had a benefit worth a remarkable £3,703, which would be about £175,000 today, although benefits did not become tax-free until 1920.

**H**APPILY, there are success stories about non-Test players such as Lancashire's Jack Simmons, who in 1980 earned a then record £128,000 (£276,480), and Kent's Norman Graham, who in 1977 received £38,000 (£132,210). The lucky ones play in large successful counties with big memberships. But Paul Johnson, the Nottinghamshire captain, received only £78,000 last year - less than half Gooch's first benefit. And in 1982, when Derek Pringle received £127,000 (£167,000) from Essex, the Derbyshire captain Kim Barnett had only £33,000. Even they did better than Somerset's Bertie Bux, who was from the age of buckets, sheets and benefit matches, not Wembley concerts and Park Lane dinners. When his benefit match was over in a day he was offered another. "No thanks," he replied, "I can't afford one." Mr Nietzsche once wrote a book called *The Birth of Tragedy*, and old Bertie would have had a chapter to himself.

## Feet of clay embarrass Agassi and Becker

**ANDRE AGASSI** suffered the unusual experience of being booed off centre court yesterday as the top seeds shrivelled and died in Monaco. The larger-than-life American was unable to adjust to the clay surface in his third-round 6-2, 6-1 defeat by Spain's Alberto Costa and departed in only

54 minutes to a cacophony of jeers and whistles. He was not alone in his embarrassment. Boris Becker paid the price for a lack of match practice when he went out 6-4, 6-3 to the unheralded Chilean Marcelo Rios, a defeat that left the title-holder Thomas Muster as the only top-10 seed in the draw.

Agassi blamed time spent battling on hard courts for his problems in adapting to the slower surface. "It is very difficult, very difficult," he said. "Movement is everything and if you don't move as well as your opponent then you have to play great shots." On Wednesday his fellow American seeds Michael

Chang and Jim Courier had also crashed out to clay-court specialists from Spain, as indeed did Sergi Bruguera, who happens to be Spanish himself. Muster beat Carlos Moyá, another Spaniard, 6-2, 7-6 to reach the quarter-finals. "My first set was the best I've played this season," said the Austrian.

## No entry for Rotterdam thugs

Michael Walker and Neil Robinson on Euro '96 security measures after the riot

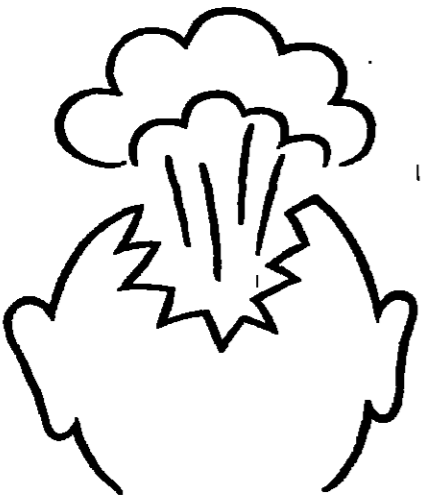
**A** MAJOR tightening of security for Euro '96 was promised yesterday in response to the crowd violence that marred Wednesday's soccer international between Holland and Germany in Rotterdam.

running battles with Dutch police would be prevented from travelling to Britain. The bans will be enforced by the German and Dutch authorities although the Home Office also has the power to issue exclusion orders to prevent known trouble-makers arriving in Britain for the tournament, which begins on June 8. The tournament director Glyn Kirton said yesterday: "We have received a full report on the incident from the Dutch FA and the German FA. They have assured us that steps will be taken to prevent the fans who were arrested from attending Euro '96. Working in conjunction with the police, we will continue to target known trouble-makers. We do not intend to let a tiny minority of hooligans spoil the enjoyment of the vast majority of law-abiding supporters who will be attending Euro '96." On Wednesday a hard core of 1,400 fans, believed to be attached to the German First Division club Fortuna Cologne, chanted racist slogans, wrecked lavatories, ripped

senior security officers from the 16 participating countries on how the event will be policed. Det Insp Peter Chapman, head of the football unit at the National Criminal Intelligence Service, said he would be discussing the violence in Rotterdam with his European counterparts as a matter of urgency. "It's early stages but we will be speaking in the next few days to German and Dutch colleagues and devising a strategy," he said. He revealed that officers from the Metropolitan, West Midlands and Greater Manchester forces, who will police Dutch and German fans during Euro '96, were in Rotterdam to observe events. Holland are due to play their first-round matches at Villa Park in Birmingham and at Wembley. Germany will play their games at Old Trafford in Manchester. The Dutch and German associations, like those of all the countries who have qualified for the finals, are obliged by Uefa to keep detailed records of known trouble-makers and liaise with their

respective police forces. All of those arrested in Rotterdam were photographed by the police and the photographs will be added to the computer data base of black-listed fans. The photographs can be transmitted by the new telephones installed at all the stadiums hosting Euro '96 matches, one of the chief measures taken to combat potential hooliganism at the tournament. Others include the use of "spotters" - undercover intelligence police - and the fact that all tickets issued by the FA will bear the purchaser's name.

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## Nude statues shock Atlanta

**A**MERICANS are familiar with cover-ups in public life, but not for many years have they seen one to match a decision taken yesterday by the Atlanta Olympic Games organising committee, writes Jack Massarik. In a move worthy of the Victorians, who used to drape curtain material discreetly around piano legs, they yesterday ordered two nude statues at Los Angeles Coliseum to be covered up for the start of the Olympic torch relay. Unable to find

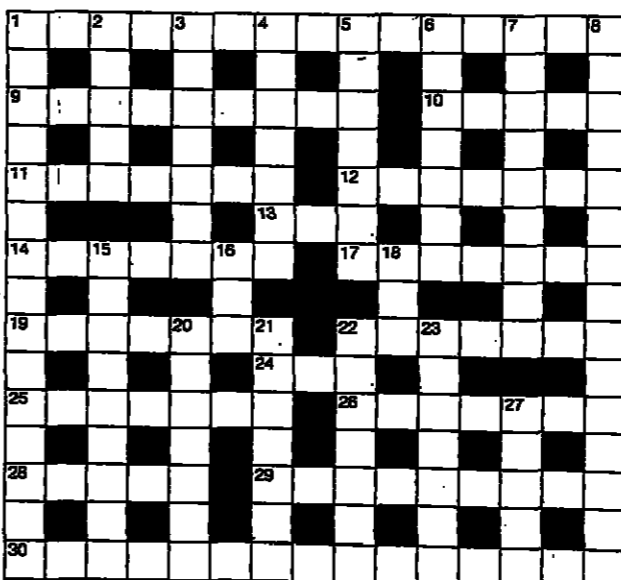
fig-leaves large enough for this essential task, officials are frantically trying to find some other way of concealing the sexually explicit sections of the sculptures from prying eyes. "It is an indecent way to start the torch relay," said a member of the Atlanta committee, all of whom feared that viewers of tomorrow's nationally televised ceremony at the Coliseum would find the nudity offensive. Coliseum officials were shaken too, but for a different reason. They pointed out that the statues, erected for the 1984 Games in Los Angeles, were anatomically correct representations of a male and female athlete, and important links to the stadium's Olympic history. Atlanta Games officials led by their chief executive, Billy Payne, are in Athens to receive the Olympic flame, which will be flown to Los Angeles tomorrow and transferred by helicopter to the Coliseum. Last night they were "not available for comment".

**Bret Easton Ellis (a friend) tells Moore that her book is "the most shocking thing I've ever read". Let's say it loud: this is complete nonsense.** Elizabeth Young

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### Guardian Crossword No 20,637

Set by Gordius

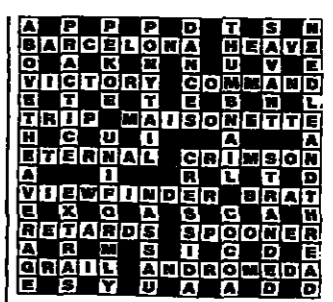


#### Across

- 1 Drunk on brewer's liquor, politician enters excellent defence (10,5)
- 9 Lost reptile brought back by no fellow on Lammis Day (9)
- 10 Twenty pascetas will include all sorts (5)
- 11 Symbolic reflection one found in bed (7)
- 12 Class remains undisciplined (7)
- 13 Bird feared by Euro-sceptics? (3)
- 14 Publicity avoids involving Diana's initial... (7)
- 17 ... failure to answer charge of strong emotional involvement (7)
- 19 Love? Give us a ring about it - we've no feelings (7)
- 22 One who may expect some refusal to start granting easy entry (7)
- 24 Was she taken from Adam? (3)
- 25 With 17, turning us into byways... (7)

#### Down

- 1 When it's fixed the time is at hand (5,5,5)
- 2 Insult to west country town's not on (5)
- 3 First mount overtaken by similar one near Lewes (7)
- 4 Signs of power? (7)
- 5 Turpin's push-over also included accompanying words (5,2)
- 6 Diana merits a break (7)
- 7 Threatening child with finality (8)
- 8 He hopes to have business for life (9,6)
- 15 English advanced in vain before mating call (9)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,637

- 16 A letter from 2... (3)
- 18 ... but first a drink (3)
- 20 To work fast is beneath the fashionable rich (7)
- 21 Greeted with a bit of luck instead for a change (7)
- 22 Called family in to establish pecking order (7)
- 23 Unofficial strike after leading fireman holds the sheet (7)
- 27 Organ featured in 15 (5)

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